

2011-Eckhart-Tolle-Hawaii-Retreat

[Speaker 1] (1:16 - 51:12)

Welcome, welcome. Does it work? No, of course not.

Does? Electronics seem to break down easily these days here. Welcome to everybody here and wherever you are on the planet.

The retreat is short but intensive. We'll have five sessions all together. Tomorrow evening, some of you may not know this yet, we are meeting again at 8 o'clock Hawaiian time for our evening gathering, probably a meditation, but who knows.

So, three sessions tomorrow. In the afternoon, probably questions and answers, or questions without answers, we'll see. So, just one or two practical things, recommendations for you, both those of you who are here and those of you who are elsewhere.

I recommend that for the duration of our retreat, you don't watch television and if possible, don't use alcohol, unless you really need a glass of wine for medicinal purposes. Even one cold beer might not matter that much, but the first cold beer can easily lead to the second cold beer and then before you know it, you have fallen below thinking, believing that you are approaching enlightenment. If some of you wish to remain silent, not speak to anybody during the retreat, of course, you're welcome to do so and if that's what you wish to do, we can agree on a little sign when somebody approaches you, you just do as the Zen master did when he asked the meaning of Zen, then people will know that you are in silence.

Although whether you are present is another question, because the question is whether there is silence in here and of course this is what this is all about, to encounter, to access, to deepen that dimension of stillness, we could call it that. And I have another suggestion for you, this goes a little bit beyond the practical already, and that is just as a, let's call it an experiment while you are here, the thoughts that arise in your mind, and particularly viewpoints on this or that matter or topic, don't give them a great deal of importance. So I recommend that as a continuing practice for you, especially for the duration of this retreat, and then hopefully that will carry on into the rest of your life.

I'll explain for a moment what that means. Most humans are or have been hijacked, so to speak, by their thoughts. I don't know this.

And when humans express viewpoints or opinions, out aloud or even to themselves in the internal dialogue that goes on in most people's minds, these viewpoints can have an enormous amount of force behind it. You can, if you listen to people, you can see how when they express their viewpoints, how much energy there is behind that, and how

important they believe their viewpoint is, because they don't know it's a viewpoint, for them it's the reality. And of course somebody else has another viewpoint, which to him or her is their reality.

So this complete identification with opinions and viewpoints, which are thoughts that have an energy behind them, become aware of that, and so that treat your viewpoints as they arise concerning all kinds of matters, the retreat, where you are, other people, the food, the lack of this or that, should, shouldn't, strong viewpoints are attached usually to each should and shouldn't, and they, why don't they, all the viewpoints, which usually dominate people's consciousness and make up a large part of their sense of identity, be aware of them, and realize it's a viewpoint, and just don't give it that much importance. It's, then you, a minute later, you may find another viewpoint coming out of your mouth, and then an awareness arises, oops, there's another strong viewpoint, and there we have, when you bring consciousness to that, you're already beginning to dismantle the egoic state of consciousness, because it thrives on identification with thought, and particularly, thoughts that have an enormous amount of self in it, so you identify with the thought, this is how it is, this is what they should do. Often, often, often viewpoints are connected with fault finding, the ego loves that, where's the next fault I can complain about?

If you can, if you come here, of course you can complain about all the species that are around you that are called tourists. How can I have a retreat with all these tourists? Of course, tourists are just humans like you, but once the mind has conceptualized another human, that human is no longer human completely to you, it's become conceptualized, and it has lost, you cannot sense its aliveness.

And in the collective consciousness or unconsciousness, sometimes collective viewpoints arise, again, in order to conceptualize others, perhaps the ego loves it, because it gets stronger when you can weaken somebody else through your conceptualization. So, observing viewpoints in yourself, and of course you will perhaps be more aware when viewpoints are being expressed in other people as you are here, but beware of saying to them, do you know what you're doing? You're identifying with a mental position again, a viewpoint.

You're in your ego, can't you see it? And then you can experience what the ego does when you are directly confronting it. You can't, you'll never win, your own ego will come up.

So, in other words then, thoughts that come into your head during this retreat, let's just put it like this, not just the strong self-identified opinions and viewpoints, but let's say all thoughts that come, and every thought is some kind of judgment, that's what a thought is, let's say for this duration of this retreat, they're not that important. And you're not losing anything, because if you don't find that satisfying at the end of the retreat, you

can give back all the habitual importance to your thoughts again, if you want to, but why not just be open to this and see what happens if no thought that arises in your mind is given a great deal of importance? That's another thought.

So that's a practice when we speak tomorrow afternoon. I hope I will get some feedback about your practice. With thoughts and viewpoints.

It is liberating. At first it seems strange. What no thought that I think is important, you feel kind of diminished.

But as you withdraw, endowing these thoughts with such importance, something else arises in you that's actually more important than any thought. And that is, again it's just a name, the dimension of awareness or presence. So thought begins to lose its hold over you.

You can use it, but it can't use you anymore. So we could say, and also I suggest this as a practice here, to observe. This is just another way of talking about what we've just been talking about.

For the sake of our practice, let's put it like this, although ultimately it's not true, as very little that one says in words is ultimately true. There are two of you here, or at any time, there are two of you, or there are two dimensions. You consist of two dimensions.

This is not the ultimate truth, but it is a very useful approach towards the truth. There are two dimensions in you. There are two of you.

Let's put it like that. There is the form you, I call it in the power of now, your form identity, which of course is, first of all, the physical body. Second, the form identity is the psychological form of you, the who you think you are, consisting of memories and thoughts, emotions, reactive patterns, the psychological form of me, physical form, psychological form.

And the psychological form consists of thoughts and emotions, feelings. Now, for most people, that's all they know about themselves, that they are their form identity, not realizing that the most vital part of who they are, they're completely unaware of. And we could call that, I call it in the power of now, your essence identity, which has no form.

We are here to deepen our awareness of our essence identity. We are not here to improve who you are on the level of form. But there are other workshops you can go to for that.

And that has its place. There may be a certain time in one's life when that is helpful. But what, the most vital thing is the realization of one's essence identity, which is formless, the formless part of who you are.

And really, this is the very core of our teaching here. You, this is what you need to get. If you haven't got it already, it's the entire, our entire retreat, all the teachings, every true spiritual teaching is really about this one thing, which isn't a thing at all, because it has no form.

And which is so hard to grasp, because we think we can capture it, by saying, ah, now I have it. You can never say, now I know this is my form, my essence identity. You can never say that.

It's elusive, and yet all-pervasive. And it is realized in a moment when the stream of thinking ceases, which from the point of view of your form identity looks like nothingness, nothing important happening there at all. If you are not totally miserable or angry or disturbed all the time, some people are, if you are not totally disturbed, miserable, angry, or in some kind of deep negative state, that means you must have some access to your essence identity without knowing it.

There must be some moments in your life when the stream of thinking, for a moment, opens up like heavy clouds. Suddenly they part, and there's some blue sky coming through. And then, of course, if you don't know it, all you know is that at that moment, suddenly you feel, it can manifest in various ways, you feel suddenly intense joy for no particular reason.

Or you feel suddenly very peaceful and alive at the same time. Or suddenly, you have a wonderful idea, not realizing that before this idea came to you, there was a space of just presence. And people don't know that even I didn't know that when my mind stopped running my life, when the self-identification with thinking came to an end suddenly, I didn't know that the self-identification with thinking had come to an end.

I couldn't have said that. What do you mean self-identification with thinking? That understanding came much later.

But I didn't know that my mind had become, slowed down and thought had become reduced by 80%. All I knew was there's so much peace suddenly. And if people ask me, why are you so peaceful?

You've got nothing to be peaceful about. I don't know. It's just a feeling.

It comes up. Only much later, when I talked to a Zen monk, three years later, he said, Zen is about the end of thinking. Oh, that's what it is.

Not that you never think again, but that dimension, the formless essence of who you are comes into your life. And that is, I read an article on Sunday in the New York Times about the Apple founder, Steve Jobs, who passed away. Now, regardless of what importance you attribute to the invention of the iPhone, iPad and iPod, there's no doubt that he was creative.

Something new came into this world through him, regardless of what importance you give it. Look out for your viewpoints. And I read that he's very quite an intuitive person.

The article was written by Walter Isaacson, who just published his biography, who also wrote a biography of Einstein and Benjamin Franklin, all of which had some access to that intuition. They call it the intuition, but it's just a word. What does that really mean?

He says both Benjamin Franklin and Albert Einstein and Steve Jobs, he says they are of varying importance, but that's the viewpoint. They all had access to what he calls intuition. And there were thinkers that had a more highly developed thinking ability, he says quite rightly, than Einstein.

And there are other people who got even more technically better than Steve Jobs. But these people had access to intuition, but he doesn't examine the author, although he writes great biographies, but he doesn't examine what does that mean, intuition? How does intuition arise?

What do we mean when we say intuition? Of course, intuition means a space opens up within you, the stream of normal thinking is interrupted or subsides, and you become alert and still. And then, out of that, an insight arises, a realization, an idea, a fresh thought that wasn't there before.

That's the intuition. So it comes to those who have some access to their formless essence. But we are not here just so that you can develop your intuition and then produce perhaps the next generation of iPads.

Maybe one of you will. It's a byproduct. I regard it as a byproduct of the evolving consciousness, that intuition, and not to even be content with just having an occasional intuition in your life.

There's more to life than that. There is an entire awakening process that is taking place in a growing number of humans such as you. It's not only that you become more intuitive, your entire being becomes awake.

It's an entire shift in consciousness happens. And that's why we are here. So I only have one thing to teach, if you can even call it that.

It's not a teaching. Words are limited. And that is finding your essence identity, or if you already have access to it, deepening it.

And I am here to help you with the ability which is growing in you, the ability to stop thinking when you choose to. Like now. Not by using willpower.

Don't hold your breath. Yes. Because once you start breathing again, an enormous amount of accumulated thought will rush back in.

Just like the boiling pot, you hold the lid down. Again and again, I will come back to that. There are ways, as we will see at some point, tonight or tomorrow, there are ways, there are entry points into that state of spacious awareness where you are aware of that, the inner space of consciousness itself, which is the essence of who you are.

There are ways, there are portals into that. But there is also, for those who are ready for it, there is the simple, the possibility of simply, without using any secondary means, of surrendering the compulsion to think and then be comfortable with the seeming nothingness that remains when you are not thinking. And also become comfortable in that state of pure awareness.

This is really what I teach, nothing else. The pure awareness, not through a technique, but directly. That state of pure awareness arising in you in which you can think, but you don't need to think.

And you can actually choose to enter that state and be your formless self, which the Buddhists call no-self, be your formless self and still operate, to some extent, through the form. A lot of the time in my daily life, there's, I am the formless consciousness because there isn't much thinking. And occasionally, there is the form.

And still, I am aware that I have a name and a body and a function in this world. There is somebody who the people call a spiritual teacher and he has become famous and is recognized in the street and he goes and gives talks and has written books and has a certain life history, which people know about and I know about. I know all that, but I choose not to carry that around with me in my head.

And so at any given moment, you also can be the person that you are with your history, that you start thinking, your name, your body, your history. You can go through life as that, especially your thoughts and viewpoints and you're getting your identity from expressing how you feel about things. This is how it is and that is how and arguing with those who have different opinions and you feel I'm really becoming somebody especially the more I argue with the world and the more I complain on the internet sites and then argue with others who have other views and all of that.

You can go through life like that being totally only the form being totally identified with the physical, but even more importantly the psychological form of I or you can realize another dimension and then you can be a hybrid creature. A hybrid creature that is partly form and partly formless. Another way of putting it, the formless shines through the form.

So before you were, let's say you were a fist, the identity that is the form identity without any awareness of your essence is the closed fist. Just waiting for the next thing to be annoyed with or sad about poor me or complain about the evil others or whatever concept you project. The 1% they are the cause of all the evil in this world.

The 1% and then you look out for people when you go through the city. He could be one of the 1%. Let's say that China has become fashionable and it will be fashionable for a while and then will be replaced by something else.

And what do you do? I mean you immediately with a term like that you conceptualize other humans and the ego loves that. You reduce them to mental concepts.

So you become a when you become a hybrid there's no longer the closed fist. There is that your hand opens up and you can even see the space between your fingers. And so you are the form.

You still have your viewpoints. Democrats, Republicans. You have viewpoints on the candidates.

Possible candidates for the next President of the United States. I have viewpoints on that too. But they are not very strong.

I can say of all those who would you choose? I would choose probably that one but who knows. But if there is self-identification with the viewpoints then they become you get trapped in them.

They become a prison but you don't know it. And ultimately you are trapped in ego. So from living like this to living like this you bounce through the gaps in you.

That's what we are here to experience. And how? By becoming comfortable with alert stillness.

Thoughtless stillness. Not in the original sense the conventional sense in which that word is used. Thoughtless is a negative term.

Somebody who is not paying attention. But thoughtless as a positive term filled with presence you could say. So I'm here to transmit presence to you which I could not do if there were not already that dimension arising in you because it can only be transmitted when it is received because ultimately this is not my awareness.

It's not my presence. And it's not yours. It is the presence.

The awareness. There's only one. It's arising through seemingly individual entities temporary forms.

And something is beginning to shine through these temporary forms. And it is a transition in human consciousness. So I want to invite you to experience for yourself the state of pure awareness.

The state of spacious aware presence like now. You may find as that arises in you that you feel your entire being becomes energized. You feel your entire being becomes aware

as you sit here in presence.

And if you ask who are you in that awareness? This is where the old question that some Indian teachers particularly used as a meditation the question who am I which you are supposed to ask yourself that is meant to be a pointer to the state of conscious pure consciousness. Who am I?

Don't answer it because every answer is another form identity. Every answer is another concept. If I said I am a famous spiritual teacher no it's a form identity it's a temporary thing.

In a few years this form will be gone and then what? Who am I? If you don't answer that question what remains after the question is a space of alert aware presence.

Who am I? Who am I? Nothing.

No thing. And if you can become comfortable with that then it that deepens. The form identity is afraid of it so it likes to I don't know who I am anymore.

Of course on the level of concept you don't know who you are. But don't worry when you need to remember your name and somebody asks you what's your name you will know it and your history and when somebody asks you would you vote democrat or republican you will still have an answer but you won't be consumed by that answer which is a thought. So allowing awareness to arise so that form and formlessness can coexist as you move through life and I I'm only attempting to show how I live sometimes form asserts itself a little bit more and at other times the formless is much more so you can at any let's give a concrete example here you are walking from your room to the restaurant or the breakfast place you can walk part of that will be through the building and then you will go outside the building where are some palm trees and there's the sea or if you are somewhere else there will be something else people who are elsewhere you can walk if you are walking immersed in thought as you walk from your room to your breakfast table you are totally trapped in your form identity you can also walk partly thinking and partly being in the state of pure awareness in the pure awareness you tend to perceive things that before you had not perceived you might notice that so you perceive you suddenly there's somebody in the elevator and you look at that other human suddenly with no judgment and you can sense their essential aliveness and you acknowledge it you might feel there might be a word that you say or two words but there is suddenly a connection with the other human being because you are in essence and then perhaps you lose yourself in some other thought and then again there comes a space you take five steps and you are spacious and aware as you take these five steps and you suddenly you look at the sky and the palm trees at that moment again you are not a person anymore you look like a person you can resume your personal identity but at that moment for those five steps you are a conscious presence embodied or shining through expressing itself through this temporary form and that's when you notice that it actually deepens some

people have it it comes to them occasionally naturally I mentioned before if you are not miserable all the time or angry all the time it means you have a little bit of access to that it occasionally without you inviting it in it occasionally is there in your life for brief moments of ah oh or when you are engaged in some activity that requires your complete attention there is suddenly a spacious awareness while you do it you are not a person at that moment realize you are not always a person when you are a person you are identified with a stream of thinking that creates the person when you are consciousness the person subsides it goes to the form identity subsides and the essence identity comes to the foreground and that shift happens in hybrids like you all the time you can actually observe it in your life your daily life the shift where the person comes out strongly remember your viewpoint for example there is a person for example there are many other instances where the person is strongly there or you can be the impersonal timeless consciousness you are the essence identity shining through the person so the person is hardly there so you observe it in yourself just walking from here to there when I walk in here I don't come in as a person imagine if I came in as a person how stressful it would be because the person will ask all kinds of questions what do they expect am I going to have enough to say to them are they going to be happy with it I hope this will not happen is my going to work what are they going to think of me what are they it's such an important gathering all these people in other parts of the world they're all streaming in oh dear what I've got if I came as a person it would be very stressful I would not be able so the only way I can do this job is not to be a person not to come as a person and I don't come as a person by not thinking a single thought when I walk from here to here a single thought would be stressful and it's beautiful it's it's it's a life and enjoyable not being a person you're intensely more intensely more alive than as a person I mean the person is half dead because the person is a conceptual identity conceptualizing everybody else and they're basically not really alive so the wonderful thing is we are emerging from the the the person to a different being an essence identity coming through the person has been wonderful it's not that you can't take up the person anymore when you need it it's fine you still function and you will also notice at times it will take you over again completely especially when you watch television and there's that candidate that you dislike or you have an argument over the breakfast table something to do with enlightenment and the person and what you believe about it and how it should be and so once you notice that in yourself that at times you are totally a person at other times you are a person but there's essence shining through and there may be times when there's only essence where the body is still there but there's only aware presence and then you can do anything you can if you bring that into whatever you do in your life it transforms whatever you do it becomes beautiful or it might remove you from somewhere all kinds of changes come into your life especially the how which is always more important than what you do is how you do what you do changes as the essence arises so I'm teaching the end of the person the person of the purely personal sense of self which is a dreadful person and if you find yourself getting angry while you are listening to this that's good but look there's the person because only the person would get angry with this

[Speaker 4] (51:16 - 51:17)

of

[Speaker 1] (51:17 - 1:07:28)

course it wants to defend itself what do you mean no person so experiment with how you the shift inside you from form from total form identity to essence identity and then you can be in your room and you can experiment by go sit down touch something and don't name it look at something don't name it and how your mind reassembles the sensory data and then you see the table or you feel the table but it's form it's a thought form it's a perception there's a form arising but when you don't label it you are also the perceiving awareness which is formless so when you perceive things around you feeling here for example the air feel it on the skin the air which is moisture laden and the breeze the warm breeze enveloped continuously like in some velvety blanket feel that but don't name it I'm naming it so simply to point you to the nameless experience of it feel that and so you have the consciousness and the form that arises but then when you don't name it or label it you are not a person perceiving that you are a conscious presence the formless perceiving forms it's an enormous liberation not to carry the burden of a person around with you as you do things and walk through life or even walk through a room you can as I pointed out you can walk through a room with the burden of a personal self or you can walk through a room as a simple presence so every moment of your life can be a practice of bringing together form and formlessness and that really is the purpose of your life the primary purpose of your life is to evolve into that so that you you can live in that the dance between form and formlessness and as you grow older the incredible opportunity for old age is to increasingly it's amazing nobody knows that the most vital things nobody seems to know that as you grow older it's really a natural way of relinquishing more and more your form identity because it's going to go anyway sometime soon relinquishing that more and more and more and more being the essence identity which is consciousness itself and then you grow old and you become more luminous as the body weakens you become more luminous and peaceful and alive more alive some old people whom I have met who live in that way are more alive at the age of 85 than they were at the age of 25 feel more alive so old age is a natural way of bringing that dimension into your life and it's a flowering of your entire life no matter what happened in your personal history it becomes irrelevant it becomes irrelevant it's taking you to this point where the person gives way to the flowering of consciousness which is pure awareness but you don't have to wait to old age at any moment the practice if you're lucky enough to be old it's even better and you will then see the beautiful thing that happens as you bring essence into your life essence of consciousness pure consciousness how the beautiful thing how it transforms every interaction with another human being because when two persons meet without in the absence of essence identity very quickly you get conflict you can't have two persons two form identities both of them having no access to their essential reality and have a harmonious relationship so

whenever two persons meet for a while the illusion can be there oh it's all working and then before you know it the conflict is there but the wonderful opportunity of bringing that into and you actually enjoy other humans which the person can't really do the person which really is the egoic self will either look for other humans to see what they can do for you or feel threatened by them no more either how can I use this human unconsciously they don't formulate it in their minds they think they're in love but they're using the other for some gratification either physical or psychological gratification and so as you bring in your essential identity you actually enjoy other humans even the briefest encounters it's there's a loving connection that can only be there when you have gone beyond this exclusive form of identity and that's the qualitative difference is just incredible in your life from as essence comes in more and more the compulsion to judge others which is what the ordinary person needs to do to uphold its illusory sense of identity goes and you can be a spacious presence with others even others you meet in the elevator and you don't they don't need to you don't need to make them see that you are in spacious presence you just you look like a person that's the wonderful thing you still look like a normal person and everybody thinks you are a normal person and yet they feel good when they see you because they feel acknowledged in their own essence but they don't know that they just think you are a lovely person but don't tell them I'm not a person that doesn't work and it's not necessary so remember this I have to mention it again because it's so easy to forget this no thought just it's a suggestion it's not a command it's just a suggestion no thought that comes into your head during for the duration of this retreat is terribly important because it's just another thought I can hear one mind saying but what you are talking isn't that thoughts yes it is but they are a particular kind of thoughts that point away from themselves to thoughtlessness so they are transitional thoughts they are little things pointing go that way and once you go that's the end so thoughts that arise in your mind that usually are saying I'm so important think a bit more about this just another thought because this is not about thoughts or viewpoints or opinions it's about transcending the realm of thought it's transcendence transcendence of the person transcendence of egoic thinking and you may notice with what how powerfully thoughts come up into their and want to get expressed and if they have to come out let them come out but be there as just watch yourself expressing your terribly important viewpoint well that means there's a presence there that's watching so this is our practice of transcending what is normally called the normal human condition transcending that into what we could call awakened consciousness and once that operates in your life the person is still there in the background but no longer runs your life no longer controls your thinking there's still yes there's a body there's a history my history what other people people think of me all kinds of that's okay and that is the transformation of consciousness it's an enormous evolutionary leap and I've said I was reminded by an old friend the other day that I used to say years ago when I was teaching this already this is so important but it's not going to be on television tonight they're not talking about it on television I said that for years until Oprah came I also recommend inviting stillness into your life especially during this

retreat so if you come here with a friend if you are with a friend or relative take some time so that there's some space between you you're not always interacting in the old the usual way or be still together become comfortable with being still together when you're talking to other people become comfortable with not expressing your opinion because it doesn't really make any difference others may be expressing theirs they may have forgotten about what I said become comfortable with not saying what you think because it doesn't make any difference really

[Speaker 4] (1:07:30 - 1:07:31)

who

[Speaker 1] (1:07:31 - 1:11:53)

you think should be the next president or whether Obama has failed or he's still doing well viewpoints and so stillness is another word for the absence of thought another word for spaciousness another word for the essence of who you are and that's why I said in stillness speaks you are never more completely yourself than when you are still because it's your essence identity that's left when all thoughts are relinquished the essence remains the essence is consciousness you are that it's timeless I invite you just for a little while now to be in that space of stillness alert presence you don't need to remember who you are to be yourself you don't need to remember who you are to be yourself you can be yourself without any story in your mind whatsoever so yourself isn't the story it's the presence the conscious presence is your essential self and it's an amazing realization that you're actually more fully yourself when you're not remembering the story and that self has no time in it no past or future it's pure presence Jesus called it the light of the world pure presence you are that you are the light of the world that's from the New Testament what an incredible liberation to be liberated from the person

[Speaker 4] (1:11:54 - 1:11:55)

oh

[Speaker 1] (1:11:55 - 1:19:23)

God I'm not my history thank God for that all my viewpoints all the emotions that come and go for tonight I also recommend to go when you're in bed not to read certainly not to watch television certainly not to surf the web or check your emails but as you lie in bed be aware of yourself as consciousness as presence and you may find your entire body becomes part of that field of presence and enjoy that you're then enjoying yourself usually that term means you're doing something that's fun but the deeper meaning is you're enjoying your essential beingness which isn't yours because whenever we say my or your it's never the absolute truth because there is nothing that's my or yours so again

as you wake up in the morning or if you should wake up in the night you have a choice you can go into thinking about yourself or somebody else and you some situation your past or your future whatever the person thinks about to keep itself going or you can choose to enjoy the presence of consciousness of being conscious as you lie there and then sleepless moments are actually quite nice and as you wake up in the morning before you get out again feel your essential beingness the presence rather than immediately go into some kind of thought at some point of course you will start to think but you start with the space and then gradually even your thinking becomes interspaced with presence and that's thinking then isn't a problem anymore so essence your essence or as I called it in the power of now essence identity is not something that you can ever know as an object in your consciousness because the essence identity is the eternal subject I so who you are you cannot become an object to yourself because that's the ego again the myth of Narcissus who looked at a reflection of himself in a pool of water and fell in love with himself which really should be translated as became obsessed with himself that's how it all started according to Greek mythology so who you are you cannot know it in your essence you can only be it the I Jesus said the kingdom of heaven cannot be seen you can't say ah it's over here or oh it's over there but truly I tell you the kingdom of heaven is within you so it cannot become an object in your consciousness because it is consciousness it is the formless dimension spiritual dimension so when you walk out of here do you walk out as a person or as a conscious presence and if somebody asks you outside what did you think of the talk the correct answer is

[Speaker 4] (1:19:24 - 1:19:24)

nothing

[Speaker 1] (1:19:36 - 1:25:36)

because the talk was really secondary the words were secondary what they point to is primary traditionally bells are called to attention and attention of course is presence and presence is awareness no thought good morning this is the last place on the planet where at this time we say good morning this morning I had an encounter with a gecko little prehistoric mini dinosaurs that are everywhere here it was looking at me it had stopped I approached got closer and closer and closer I was this close I knelt and we looked at each other for two or three minutes this close I looked into its eyes blinking his her its eyes were blinking looking at me it yawned once which doesn't mean it was tired it's probably like dogs when there's some uncertainty sometimes they yawn and we met in that place of not thinking because it wasn't thinking and I wasn't thinking the only difference was well it's quite a difference

[Speaker 4] (1:25:37 - 1:25:38)

the

[Speaker 1] (1:25:38 - 1:26:05)

gecko is two million years prior to thought as an expression of consciousness and I am just thirty years post thought in the evolution of consciousness

[Speaker 4] (1:26:09 - 1:26:11)

there are

[Speaker 1] (1:26:11 - 1:59:17)

certain similarities between the state of pre-thought that nature dwells in animals trees which are all expressions of the one consciousness and the state of no thought when you have been through thought as a species I've been through thousands of years of thought and come out the other end transcend it doesn't mean leave behind totally transcend still includes what you transcend so you transcend another dimension opens up and the old can still operate within the new dimension and so the similarities are a state of non not feeling the separateness between you and the world around you feeling a sense of continuity and oneness which also the natural expressions of consciousness that exist prior to thought they also exist in that state of natural connectedness in which there are no problems yes challenges but not problems because only the mind manufactures problems when it takes up a reactive position towards the challenges of life which then strengthen the false self so no problem no sense of separation and again when you transcend thought you don't make up a world of problems anymore challenges continue to come that's fine life won't leave you alone that's how it's meant to be but you don't make up problems and besides the challenges that people face in the mind identified state large percentage of them are self manufactured by that ultimately dysfunctional state of consciousness in other words you make up a lot of your own drama when you are in that state of mind identification the egoic consciousness unnecessary drama unnecessary conflict through reactivity all that falls away when you transcend thinking that's why we are here and then also you have a much deeper empathy of course with nature and animals and other humans I talked last night about moving in the two dimensions the dimension of form and existing as the physical and psychological form here a person with a personal identity yes for a little while that's the case the physical body yes personal history yes certain patterns inside you that are still operating and may remain and that is else that's actually much more vital that most humans overlook because they are hypnotized by form so they are totally identified and pursuing forms outer forms thought forms rights so you see how the pursuit of forms I hope that's not what is meant in the declaration or whatever it is the pursuit of happiness that is guaranteed in the united states as one of your rights the pursuit of happiness I hope but what is not meant by that is the pursuit of forms. Where is the happiness that I am looking for in this or that or some kind of thoughts or situations or people?

Of course, the happiness is in the formless. True happiness is only there when you

access the formless. So at some point, I would, perhaps not in my lifetime, but I would suggest it already for somebody else to take up when this body is gone, an amendment that explains the actual true meaning of the pursuit of happiness so that people don't get misled.

So I hope somebody who is watching this, when this body has dissolved, will take it up. But sometimes things can happen fairly quickly. It would be a miracle if somebody took it up already, but who knows?

Miracles happen. So in the meantime, it's good enough if we here begin to live this truth and then transmit it by living it, transmit it to others, not always necessarily by explaining something, but more vitally by embodying the truth so you don't pursue happiness anymore. By pursuing, which really means running after, forms.

I'm looking for the ultimate, the situation that finally is going to make me happy, says the egoic consciousness. And what it conceives of that, I don't know what it is, perhaps total comfort, total security, absolute certainty, a kind of death, if you really could find it, total comfort, everything is in its place, nothing disturbs me anymore out here, I'm protected, absolutely safe. Or maybe it thinks of continuous pleasure, taking in pleasure through food, sexuality, I need, I must have, I want.

Where's the next satisfaction that won't give me satisfaction? Can you give it to me? Maybe on the physical level, let's try something new.

Or maybe on a psychological level, you can enhance who I think I am. Maybe you can enhance my illusion. Oh no, I mustn't say that because it's so real, isn't it?

It's who I am. Maybe that's the ultimate state. So for some egos, it may be total comfort, for other egos, it may be a continuous pleasure, paradise, or you can project paradise.

If you live in a cold climate, you think of yourself as finally achieving paradise by living in a warm, lovely, warm place like here. But of course, if you lived here, you would soon see there are challenges even here. Or if you live in a hot climate, as in the paradise is a cool place, but it's all projections, all seeking something out there to fulfill me, the pursuit of happiness where happiness cannot be found because you're looking for it in the realm of forms.

Overlooking, because forms are so seductive, and I remember when I talk about forms, it's not just the outer forms that attract your attention and you want something from them, but even more fundamentally, the thought forms that arise, because really, all outer forms become, before you can experience them, become translated into mental forms. Even if your car gives you a sense of identity, just one simple example, it can be many, many other things, but it can add something to your identity. It's not, ultimately, it's not the outer car because you don't know whether there actually is a car out there.

It's just what the sensory data gets transmitted and your mind creates a picture and it calls it my car. So it's ultimately the identification with forms is ultimately to do with forms that arise in consciousness, in your consciousness, as this or that. Thoughts and images in consciousness arising.

Yes, they are hypnotic and seductive until a point, a human being reaches a point when he or she begins to realize, hmm, I can't get no satisfaction. Ha, ha, ha, ha, because there's something not right with this pursuit of happiness through forms. And then there's some suffering, of course, comes with that because you can't get satisfaction and it's so frustrating to live with these forms because no situation you ever go into is really satisfying, relationship included.

And as the more you're identified with your form identity and the less you're in touch with your essence identity, the formless, the less satisfying relationships are also. The less satisfying your entire life experience is, although you get brief moments of satisfaction, but and then again, you come down after the party, the big party, and the next morning you're, and the party can also be used as a metaphor. It can be an actual party, or it can be a party of this great romantic relationship that's just happened.

And the coming down just takes a little bit longer. You have to wait until after the honeymoon. Who is this person?

And that's in every relationship, there comes a moment when you start living together, when you ask yourself, who is this? And the other person may ask him or herself the same question. So the pursuit of happiness is realizing the unsatisfactory nature of seeking satisfaction through forms.

And then there's the beginning of an awakening. Perhaps you hear something, a spiritual message, a teacher teaching, or it just happens by itself where something arises within you that is an aliveness, an alive stillness, an alertness, and you look around and there's an enormous delight suddenly, it begins with the simple things that you suddenly notice around you. You're no longer looking for the big fix to fix your life, and suddenly you notice the miraculous nature of the forms, and there's a little paradox here.

The beginning of the arising of the formless manifests often as an incredibly enhanced appreciation of all the life forms around you. It's but very different from before where you were just selectively seeking out forms to satisfy you, you wanted something from them, but now you allow them to be and appreciate their beauty and aliveness. And you walk around as if you had just been, just come into this world, and you look, everything is alive, and it's miraculous, and you can sense this delight in all the little things.

And you look around, and what's happening is, of course, the personal self has subsided, and you're no longer perceiving the world around you through the mental accumulations, which make up the ego. You are becoming, your essence identity has emerged, and

you're looking as consciousness, not as a form identity of consciousness having become a form, but the pure consciousness. And every little thing gives you delight, or rather, the delight is there inside you as you perceive the world, and what's happening on the, it's really a non-personal event when you're beginning to perceive all the miraculous life forms around you.

What does that really mean? It means the universe delights in its own creations, because you are not separate from the universe. You are not in the universe.

That would be an egoic perception. You are the universe expressing itself as this temporary form. The ego thinks, I am in the universe.

This is me, and there's the rest of the world, the universe. But, of course, you are it. You are an expression of it.

So when you delight in a flower, a breeze that touches your skin, the lapping of little waves, the sound of the rain, the gecko, the sky, the incredible cloud formations that you can see here that change every few minutes. Every few minutes, the great artist in the sky paints a new abstract picture in the sky of magnificence with light shining through it, and you can just sit there and delighting in the changing pictures when you look at the sky. And your mind is still then.

You are consciousness delighting in what it has created, the forms that it has taken. But you can only really delight in the forms that consciousness has been born into. They're all temporary, the clouds.

No single cloud is long-lived. It dissolves quickly and becomes something else. The body just lasts a little bit longer.

So the universe delights in itself through this form. The personal has receded. It doesn't mean you cannot deal with your bills anymore.

It's nothing to do with that. You can, when the time comes, you take, you open the envelope, or however you do it, and you pay your bill. Or if you can't pay your bill, then you take some step.

Maybe you have to live without the electricity. Whatever it is, it's not a problem. It just, it is, and you face it.

Let's go back in the little things that you begin to notice that are delightful when the personal self no longer occupies your entire field of consciousness. In other words, when the forms don't fill up your mind, one thought form after another. You don't really appreciate anything when you walk through nature that's here, but really, wherever you are, there will be delightful things even when it's, even if you live in London, Seattle, or Vancouver, and it's raining in gray at the moment there are still delightful things,

delightful forms.

And the shift then is the personal can still operate, but it is no longer occupying the main part of your consciousness. So that's the shift I, yesterday, last night, I talked in terms of becoming a hybrid so that you are still the personal, which includes thinking, still operates in you, especially when it's needed, but it does not interfere with your enjoyment of life when it is not needed. And a lot of time it is not needed.

Not only is it not needed, it is, it interferes with the happiness that could be there because it's seeking happiness elsewhere, ignoring the true happiness that is already here. And this is how the person blocks the happiness that is there, it's already here, it can't see it. So when you see a human who is totally identified with the personal self, which are thoughts primarily, they don't see the sky, they don't see the flower.

And if they do, there's a glimpse at best. Oh, that looks nice. And you go back to your thoughts.

Oh, what a lovely flower, I wonder what it's called. My aunt so-and-so has a flower in her garden, I remember that, and then what happened to her? Well, then she got married three times and then she had five children.

Or at best, it says, oh, that sky looks like a, that looks like a Turner painting. Okay, there you go, okay, that's good. But then again, you immediately, you go into art, thinking about art and you don't realize that, yes, the Turner, Turner is a British artist who painted lovely, luminous views of sky and so on.

But so best, again, for a moment, you see it and immediately a naming happens and immediately the naming draws you into further thought forms. So you're very little, you exist in this world, you see little slits through which you see the aliveness of the world around you through little slits in your box, the box is the mind, and then you have little slits or holes in it and occasionally you had to glimpse through the little hole in your box and say, oh, that's lovely, and then you go back in the box. And that's called normal existence.

And the box is full of patterns that keep you trapped of fault finding and complaining and dissatisfaction and worries and anxieties and thinking and thinking and this and that and what about me? What's going to happen to me then? I mean, the burden of my life, my life, what's going to happen to my life?

What has happened to my life? Where's it all gone? What have, it wasn't meant to be like that.

It all went wrong somewhere. Where did I go wrong? Where was that?

I think it all started when I was eight with my parents. Or my first wife, or my first

husband, they really messed me up. And then you try to work out some explanation or some conceptual, trying to arrive at some conceptual conclusion about your life, your life.

Well, your life, what is your life when you think about your life? It's a stream of thoughts, but you're so captured by the stream of thoughts that you believe this is absolutely real, this is my life. And then maybe you arrive at some conclusion one day.

Maybe it says, I failed completely. I was treated unfairly by life. Never was given a chance.

Other people get all the lucky breaks. I didn't get any. Nobody gave me a lucky break.

And there are these disgusting 1% people who get all their, all their lucky breaks. I hate them. And then all that spiritual nonsense.

God said all that about it doesn't solve my problems, does it? I have to think about this more carefully now. So you confuse your life with thoughts in your head.

So you have a stream of thoughts in your head and you call that my life. Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha. That's called delusion.

And that's why in the path now I differentiate between what people call my life and my life situation. When you are identified with forms with your mind, you don't even know what your life is. You don't have a life.

You just think you do. It's obscured totally. You have it.

You can't have a life. Actually, you are life, but you don't know that. Ha, ha.

And so that is the state of form identity. When the transcendent dimension, the essence of who you are, the formless, which you could call the spiritual dimension, but I don't want to use words that have lots of misunderstandings around it. When that is not realized in your life, so you're in the box and perceive things from and through the box.

And as the essence arises and it arises, for some people, through the simple act of becoming aware of the present moment. When your attention moves to the present moment, you cannot carry your conceptual life, the baggage of your conceptual life in your head with you because then the present moment doesn't even exist for you. So when you, the present moment for many people opens up through sense perception.

That's the first step. That's the first level of the present moment is this becoming aware of, oh, you consciously, you perceive through a little space. A little bit more is opened up than the slit or the little hole in the box.

The slit is widened. And there's the present moment. And there, at that moment, you

feel the breeze, the air on your skin.

And there, at that moment, you are not thinking. There's a moment of pure perception. And there, at that moment, you look at the sky and you see the beauty, but you also sense something.

At that moment, you sense an aliveness in you that wasn't there before. That's life. The aliveness wasn't there before when you were in your stream of thinking.

This is called life. When you delight in something that you see or hear or touch or smell around you, little things. They're all delightful, ordinary things.

So you begin to appreciate all that. And the universe is waking up. The universe is waking up and delights in itself.

And so you can truly say that you created whatever you perceive around you because you are the universe. You are the one consciousness out of which it has all come. So you created it, not the person, of course, and you delight in your own creation.

It's really only then that the beginning of the Bible becomes true. When God says he, God then looks at the creation and sees, oh, it was good.

[Speaker 4] (1:59:18 - 1:59:19)

Oh, that's good.

[Speaker 1] (1:59:20 - 2:45:34)

You sense the goodness of life. Now, so for many humans, it starts with the present moment as a portal. And the present moment starts with, and an essential part of it remains, the sensory world around you.

But that's only the one level of the present moment. It is so delightful, where is that delight? That is at a deeper level than the sense perception, beautiful as it is.

But the delight, the joy that is there when you are present and perceive through presence is the formless. You can't name it. It's there in you.

It's that where the joy or delight arises. It's consciousness itself. It has no form.

So you could then, let's say you are delighting in the play of forms, a breeze, a flower, the clouds, the buzzing of an insect, raindrops falling. And even as you become more familiar with this way of perceiving, even in, you can delight in any form. You can even delight in looking at traffic moving because they are all forms that have arisen.

So there's a flow of traffic. You can delight in a green or red traffic light without acid. It's a life, everything.

You can delight in picking up a toothpaste and for a moment feel its beingness. Anything, not just something that ordinarily we would call beautiful. Yes, that of course it's wonderful, but also things that ordinarily one would not call beautiful or even be aware of.

But it all has its place and its aliveness. And so you have delighting in that, but what is it that underlies that in you? And that is something you cannot name.

You can only sense as an underlying aliveness through which the perception happens. And that underlying aliveness has nothing to do with you, the person, with its history and its name and so on. It is the delight of consciousness itself, or you could call it being.

You can feel the being, the one being, or you could just call it the one that underlies the many. And you realize, I am that. Total transcendence of the temporary form of me.

And that is, when that operates in your life, then the transition has happened and the formless is then shining into your life through the forms. That is awakening to who you are in your essence. That is the answer to the question, who am I?

Which has no conceptual answer, but a realized answer. You are the essential aliveness. You are being.

If we want to use words to point to this, we could say being is the formless, timeless, one life. The uncreated, it's a Buddhist term. Another Buddhist term for this is the unborn or the unmanifested.

These are all pointers pointing to the same. It's life itself before it becomes a life form. When you realize you are that in the depths of your being, then you realize that this is the realization of being and what you perceive around you, you could call existence because it's an apt term because existence etymologically, in other words, the origin of the word from Latin, ex means out, stens comes from to stand out.

So whatever exists is a form that stands out, ex. Ah, a thought too, it comes out of the one, a little bit like the ripples, the ocean produces ripples. And so every ripple says, I, I, me, me.

Of course, it has very short lived. Every ripple in existence is short lived. Even on the planet, on a cosmic scale is short lived, every ripple in existence, but all that is what is existence.

So you have the being, the one, the unborn and the forms. So that is the realization of the one. And then you realize what you are perceiving is all an expression, a temporary manifestation of the one life, which you could call God, a term I avoid because many misperceptions have accumulated around it.

So that is the, the destiny of the universe is of course, inseparable from your destiny. And the destiny is the awakening, the awakening so that the universe can, on the one hand, delight in the forms it has created and continuously pours out, creates the play of forms. It delights in that it's no longer identified totally with each form, this form, but also the universe awakens to its own essence or beingness.

It had to be, it had to lose itself in the forms before it could awaken to that. And this is a kind of explanation of the purpose of the universe, which should be taken as they say in Latin, well, that's the origin of the expression, with a grain of salt, because whatever we can say about the nature of the universe, which is vast, can only be a very distant approximation of what is actually there. So when I explain what the purpose of the universe is, it's even deeper, much deeper than words could say, much deeper.

All we need to know here is not to have some new explanation of the nature. I'm only giving you that as a little added on remark, but the essential thing here is the awakening to your formless identity. And again, then, the portal, the most accessible portal to that state of consciousness, and it's terribly accessible, it's the present moment.

So you don't have to figure out, how can I find my formless identity? And then the mind says, well, first of all, I'm not quite clear what you mean by that. Can you explain a bit more?

No, you don't need that. Your formless identity opens up with a simple acknowledgement of the present moment. That's the moment you acknowledge the present moment, it begins to open.

The moment you acknowledge the present moment, the personal me recedes, the ego, the mind stream, identification with which is the ego recedes, something opens up at the present moment, as I said, begins with an acknowledgement of some form. That's how you get hold of the present moment. Sensory perception can, that can, there you hold, you look at something, you touch something, you see something, you hear something, and your attention is there, and you're not naming it, pure perception.

That in itself, beautiful spiritual practice, that's all you really need. If you could do pure perception as you walk around a lot of your life, and then you notice, I'm going to go through it again because it's so vital. There, there's the form, there's the form, but what you delight in, in the beautiful form, and again, as I mentioned before, the beauty, you see beauty even in insignificant things like the toothpaste or your shoes or whatever, the carpet, not just, it's not the outer form that is, there's an essence behind everything you see, there is an essence in everything you see that is one with your own essence, and that's what you sense, and that opens up through form, giving attention to sense perception. And then I recommend, once this begins in your life, from time to time, when you see something that is delightful, close your eyes and let go of it and sense the delight without the form. You look at the sky and you say, ah, then just as a little

practice from time to time, close your eyes if you're not driving, close your eyes and then sense the delight without the form, the aliveness, and there's no thought in it, it's not an emotion, it's deeper than that, no thought, no emotion, just life itself, delighting in itself, and now there's a delight without any form, but the form got you there, and that's the beauty when you look at another human being, also, if you don't react to their silly person, because almost every person is a bit silly without the transcendent dimension, well, very limited, conditioned by their past, full of stuff, if you don't react to this, which only strengthens your own form identity, your own silliness, so you have two silly people fighting each other, you don't react to that, and then you can delight in another human's presence through not naming the other human in any way, but first you contemplate their form, but that's only the surface phenomenon, and immediately you penetrate beyond the form, so to speak, and from within you, you feel the delightfulness of life, and then you recognize that dimension in the other, and that connects you very deeply, in other words, it's the realization of oneness, but not conceptually, you don't say, now I realize oneness, you don't need the words, and that's where there's true, it's only then that true, as in the words of the Dalai Lama, he uses the term kindness, but of course it's deeper than that, kindness arises, language is limited, that's why he has very little choice in words, love, is that a better term?

Well, again, it's like God, which has many misperceptions around it, but yes, it is love, it is a deep empathy, it is a sensing, a delighting in another human, and you don't want anything from them, you don't want anything from the other human, you're delighting in their presence, because there is a shared presence or aliveness, and then if it's a human that you are familiar with, a relationship, family, whatever, there also you can sometimes look at the other, so-called other, and then for a moment, close your eyes and let go of the form, and feel the other in here, as yourself, feel the other's presence in here as yourself, because it's essence identity, it's consciousness itself, it's life itself, which is, that's the thing you love in the other, whether it's an animal or a human or a flower, that is what you love in the other is not the form, but the life within the form, which is consciousness itself, which is your own essence, if you love the form only, it gets frustrating very quickly, because it will not satisfy you, neither the physical form will satisfy you after a little while, nor the psychological form of the other, the person with its conditioning is not going to satisfy you, so there's always this dissatisfaction, but if you can look beyond the form, sense beyond the form, first in yourself, you can't start with the other, you can't say, I want to sense you beyond form, no, you can only do it through your own essence, so there you go first, you start with a flower or whatever it is, and then you close your eyes, and then go within and feel, you can't name what it is that you feel, and you don't, it's even to say you feel it is not quite correct, we are using language and every sentence has a subject and an object, so you say, I feel the life that I am, expressed in language, it sounds as if there was I and life, but that's because we are using language which separates everything into subject and object, this is ultimately not true, you sense life as yourself, you sense yourself, there is no subject and object in that

self-recognition of you as being, of you as consciousness, what you sense is not an object, there is not I and life, I don't sense the life that I am, and then life here becomes conscious of itself, that's a better way of putting it, but you have to kind of be so careful with language, because it's language is to do with the world of duality and multiplicity, that's what it reflects, so in the awakening, there is no longer subject and object, it's not that I sense life, the life that I am, I sense the I am, you can't really say more than I am, the I am knows itself, I'm explaining in words, just it can be helpful just to have the little pointers, what matters is that recognition in yourself, and it's everything else in your so-called life, which doesn't exist, because you don't have a life, you are life, you have a life as long as you have a conceptual life, we talked about that, but everything else in the life that you think you have, is quite unimportant compared to this, compared to this awakening, and everything else in your so-called life, the life that you have, which is a conceptual thing, a lot of these things actually become easier, the life of form that you inhabit, your life situation is so much easier to deal with, when you are rooted in the formless, when you are rooted in beingness, then the way in which you, not only the way in which you perceive, the life of forms around you, changes because it becomes delightful, but also the way in which you interact, with the life around you, people, situations that arise, whatever it is, that also changes fundamentally. And how does it change?

It changes, because first of all, you will notice, nothing that is to do with the world of form, your life situation, and whatever arises there, it loses its absolute seriousness, it's the which it has, if that's all you know, because if the life of form is all you know, it's dreadfully serious, because it's all that matters to you, and every situation that you discuss with other people, this is, what are we going to do about this? Oh my God, and now he wants us to do that, he's trying to do that, what's he, other people, what are they trying to do to us?

Now we are going, what's going to happen if we do that? It could be disaster. Now we have to be very careful here, this is complete identification with, oh, everything matters so much, and then we react, I'm acting out a little bit, but basically, that's how it is, and everything is dreadfully serious, because it's all you have, and you're still hoping at some point, it's all going to work out and satisfy you, until the next lawsuit comes.

So it loses, it's this absolute seriousness, and then you deal with, you can deal with it, but you deal with it in a more spacious way, there's always, and this is the wonderful thing that happens when you are connected, there's always a bit of space when you deal with, for example, you have a discussion, what are we going to do about this? And as you listen to the other person, as you speak, there's always some space there in the background, and that's the formless. So there's a, sometimes it's called detachment, which could also be misinterpreted, but there is definitely, although you deal with it, you give it your fullest attention, but there is a sense of space around situations and people that ultimately is inner space, so you have both forms that arise in your life and space

that is there at the same time as you deal with the forms.

And that is, for example, when you listen to somebody, let's say you're discussing what to do in business, some business situation or whatever it may be, you're engaged in discussing, is there, there's some space as you listen, there's just listening, spacious listening, that's space. And that means what ultimately, what ultimately matters in any situation that arises in your life isn't the outcome or what you say or do or what other people say or do, what ultimately matters is whether through you, space comes into the situation, whether you embody spacious awareness while you do things, say things or listen to other people. The spacious awareness that is in you now as you listen here, spacious awareness when you're listening to a spiritual discourse is of course easier to enter because every word in spiritual discourse, if it comes from spatial awareness, in other words, if it's truly alive, it awakens that dimension in you unless it's totally blocked.

It awakens the dimension in you. So as you sit here, you can dwell in that spacious awareness of essence, thoughtless awareness fairly easily, perhaps not continuously, perhaps occasionally your mind will come in and say, what the hell is he talking about? And then that thought subsides and the egoic personality goes back into the background.

And again, there is spacious awareness. And so this is a wonderful place to experience this fully or as fully as possible at this point for you. But then you go into everyday life where the discourse you hear from other people is not spiritual discourse that is designed to point you to spatial awareness.

No, what you're listening to in other people is egoic minds totally identified with what they are saying, totally identified with every thought. And then it's more challenging to listen and listen is the first step, to listen through spatial awareness and not get drawn into their identification with form, total identification with form. So you have to be, hold the presence, embody the presence, be the presence, even though the other may be completely trapped in form or the other people around the table.

A meeting of six agitated egos plus you, that's a challenge. And the words that are spoken around the table are not meant to take you into spacious awareness. They are meant to pull you out of spacious awareness and say, this really matters.

All that's, forget about that spiritual stuff. This is real. We have a lawsuit against us.

They're doing this, trying to do this to us. Now, this is what matters. And then the challenge is stay present.

And present with your whole body as you sit there and listen to the egos without judging them or reacting or confusing who these beings are with their state of consciousness. These people are so annoying. You're confusing, of course, the reaction with who they

are.

It's like saying, the weather is miserable. The weather doesn't know about it, that it's miserable. You just told the weather that it's miserable, but of course the weather just is.

And everybody just express whatever their state of consciousness is. And the moment you call it something and believe in it, you have joined them in their state of consciousness. The moment you believe in a thought that arises that judges the other, welcome, you're one of them.

So the other people, it's of course, as I mentioned somewhere, Jean-Paul Sartre said, hell is other people. That's of course true from the egoic point of consciousness. The literal, I believe my French is very limited, but the original in French actually is, hell is les autres, the others.

Hell is the others. That's the egoic perception, ultimately. There's a movie that we saw recently.

It's called, There Will Be Blood. And it's, I think it got even some Oscars. The word ego is never mentioned, but really what it shows is how one man's ego grows and grows and grows and grows until it reaches complete insanity.

So other people, the otherness, I use that term sometimes, the egoic consciousness, the form-identified consciousness likes to emphasize the otherness of others. It wants to make the other really other by judging and dismissing and criticizing and fault-finding. And perhaps a lot of the time it's actually true, what it says, but it's not true.

Sometimes it's true, and sometimes it's a complete projection. You never know. So whatever, if your last five, four ex-wives say the same thing about you, there's probably some truth in it.

If it's only one ex-wife, it could be a complete projection. But if it's three, four, five, they have to look more carefully. If they all say you are a jerk, you're a controlling jerk, then you may have to admit, maybe something there.

But at other times, what other people say about you may be a complete projection of their conditioning. You never know. But whatever it is, when you, you emphasize the otherness of others, that's the ego loves it because it feels superior when it can criticize, judge, find fault, whatever it does to others, dismiss, evaluate negatively, find wanting in this or that area, not good enough, whatever it is, the ego feels good about that because the moment you judge the other, you feel superior, not knowing that you've become more trapped in your own form identity, which is thought forms. And this is why Jesus, he didn't explain it the way I explain it now, because at that time, the people wouldn't have understood what he said. Judge not so that you are not judged.

You judge, in other words, when you judge another, you're really doing it to yourself. You yourself get trapped in the judgment, which is a thought form, which you totally believe in. And in that sense, when you judge another, you judge, you are judged.

You believe in that. And so a wonderful spiritual practice is to relinquish judgment of others and allow them to be in this moment, brings us back to the present moment. Allow them to be as they are and be the space for them.

Lovely. And then you can be in the meeting with five agitated egos, and you can be the one conscious presence there and hold that state. And that's more challenging than here.

You will feel the pulse of the collective mind pulling you. This is so serious. Can't you see that?

Not that you have to, don't say this isn't serious. That doesn't work. You have to embody it.

It may be relatively serious on the level of form, but it hasn't that dreadful, it's not absolutely. I also use the word important. Whatever happens on the level of form may be relatively important, but it's not absolutely important.

The absoluteness is knowing who you are beyond forms and then living this knowing in your daily life. And then you become a blessing wherever you go. If you live that, you bless every situation.

You heal situations you go into without feeling, I am healing. You're not actively doing the healing. It happens by embodying that consciousness and you will be challenged from within and from without just because that is arising in you, is awakening in you the essence of who you are does not mean that your egoic mind is not going to come back.

Let's for a moment consider it because there's some truth in it. Almost an entity that lives in you that has lived in you for a long time, thousands of years in human beings, an entity that consists of mind forms and emotional forms that consciousness has identified with completely, which is the dream state of unconsciousness, the nightmare, the dream, that exists in you as a little, a nice, I love the little creature in Lord of the Rings, the little, the little, and it's really, it's a visual representation of ego. When you look at it, it's beautifully done in the both written and in the movie too, how it goes about and that little creature, this cunning thing, it doesn't just go away.

It's, it will want to come back up. You can, don't fight it. You can't fight it.

You can, if you fight it, you energize it, but recognizing it is enough because recognizing, what does that mean? Recognizing is recognizing there's a light of consciousness shining on it. Consciousness is the unconditioned, timeless, and the form is consciousness that

has become a little bit like frozen water.

So there's up, there's no duality. This is just an analogy. The forms that are stuck in your mind as egoic forms, consciousness has become that frozen heart.

So it's ultimately the ego is not separate from consciousness. It's just an appearance of consciousness as solid. And it goes, as it comes into the field of awareness, it gradually dissolves, but that could take a little while.

In the meantime, it comes up and will try to trick you and sometimes succeed in giving it energy again by identifying with the thoughts it thinks. And what does it think about? Me and my life.

Oh my God. And there you are, trapped, it drags you along and you completely get back into it. And the little thing comes up and says, oh, I know exactly how I can get your attention.

Just this little thought.

[Speaker 4] (2:45:34 - 2:45:35)

And it's, ooh.

[Speaker 1] (2:45:41 - 4:30:54)

And you follow it and then hours later, you wake up, oh, and there's a little bit of spacious awareness again. And for the first time again, you see the sky. And you smell the air.

And there's a feeling of aliveness inside you. So that may happen. Have compassion with yourself, the ego and identification with thinking.

Don't consider it as a personal problem of yours. It's not, neither the ego nor the identification with thinking, which creates the ego is personal. It's inherited.

Everybody inherits it as a human. It is the inherited condition, the human condition. That is the Buddha already recognized as that which leads to suffering.

The state that leads to suffering. Dukkha, dukkha, misery, translated as misery, unsatisfactoriness, not good enough. Suffering, unhappiness, discontent.

That's all dukkha, inseparable from identification with thought. He already saw that. That comes as you exist as a hybrid.

There are two forms of hybrid. There's the more advanced hybrid. And there is the more basic hybrid.

The more basic hybrid creature, those are the first production line. The more basic hybrid creature is periodically, completely taken over again by the egoic consciousness. And then after a while, they wake up again.

And then they are back in pain body or something and do it also, which is the emotional part of the ego of old accumulated painful emotion that becomes, that energizes the egoic mental patterns. So the hybrids, the basic hybrids lose themselves in that and then come back for a while and then lose themselves again. And then gradually you advance to the more advanced hybrid.

Which means forms, you can, thoughts come up in you, but there's never complete identification anymore with them. There's always some spaciousness and you can use thoughts beautifully, but always with spaciousness in the background. And that is the beautiful state when you are an advanced hybrid of form and formlessness.

Then you are the advanced hybrid and then problems don't exist anymore in your life. You no longer even think in terms of my life. There's only life and unfolding every moment.

And it's beautiful, even the challenges. Comfort is not the ultimate aim of the universe. Security is not the ultimate aim of the universe.

The lack of challenges is not the ultimate aim. And the universe is not here to make you happy. Things are not here to make you happy.

People are not here to make you happy. They're here to make you conscious so that you find the happiness, the true happiness that's not dependent on things and forms. But forms are good, but the formless is the good.

Thanks. Welcome to our evening meditation or middle of the night meditation. If you're somewhere else or morning meditation if you're in Europe, whatever time it is on the external level where you are, it's the now and that's our meditation for this evening on the now.

We start with the surface of now, which is whatever we perceive at this moment, whatever you perceive, whatever I perceive, really it's the I. Okay. So you perceive this person sitting on a chair, talking, you hear the voice.

There's the totality of the room. There's the ever present noise of the air conditioning. There are the lights, the ceiling and the walls, all part of the totality of your visual perception.

The people in the room, you perceive them and peripherally perhaps, because your focus is perhaps on this man sitting in a chair. And you feel the body on the chair. Yes.

Resting. So there's a totality of sensory perception. Let's see, I actually call it the surface of the now or you can call it the outside of now.

And then you're also aware of yourself breathing and you may be aware of the energy inside the body. So we are gradually moving from the outside to the inside. And if you allow the outside to be as it is, although there's nothing special here in this room, it is quite nice, it has its own beauty.

I mean, even artificial light is quite nice. Sounds are quite nice if you allow them. And if you don't complain about the air condition, even that is quite pleasant.

And imagine it's the om sound. And now comes the really important part. You're aware of yourself as the perceiver of all these things.

You're not aware of yourself right now or of the personal self, because at this moment, let's use this word, I hope that you are not thinking about your personal history right now or the problems you've had in the future, in the past or might have in the future. So when I say you're aware of yourself, it's not you're aware of yourself in the usual way, because when you usually say you're aware of yourself, you're aware of the story of yourself, you and your life, you and your position in the world, you and other people and so on. No, more simple now in our meditation, you're aware of yourself, not as a person with a history, but a deeper level of self.

And I begin by calling it the perceiver of whatever it is that arises in your perception, auditory, visual, feeling, sensing. Perhaps you can even feel the air a little bit. There's this little bit of air flow, very subtle.

That's the feeling level or feeling your chair, your body resting on the chair or your feet on the floor. So, but who is it that is perceiving this? Not the person, because the person is a story.

The story is not perceiving this. So for a moment, let's not call it anything, but be aware of the simple fact that you are perceiving this, but you don't know what that is, what is that I that is perceiving. But there's no doubt that that is there.

And even if what you're perceiving is a dream, perhaps it is. It certainly has a lot in common with a dream because a dream evaporates very quickly. It doesn't last.

Many philosophers have discussed whether the human existence is a dream. We don't need to go there. Can say it might be, but even if it is, if it's all not real, as some people say, there is something in which the dream appears.

The dream is being experienced. One could say there's a light in which the forms appear and you are that. And there's no doubt that if it's a dream, it's happening.

If it's all unreal, at least that unreality is happening. In that light of awareness, because without that awareness, there would be no sense perception. There would be no room.

There would be no man on this chair or voice or somebody listening to the voice. So that's the one thing that cannot be doubted. Everything else you can doubt whether it's actually real.

And that awareness is formless. It doesn't have a history because your entire history appears in it when you remember it in that awareness. And when things happened that once happened, they happened in the present moment, in the light of awareness.

And you can only remember it as the awareness now. So I'm now asking you, although you continue to be aware of sense perceptions, to simply acknowledge the fact that you are aware. And even that is not perhaps putting it rightly to acknowledge the fact that there is awareness.

In other words, you are aware that you are aware. You are conscious of being conscious. It sounds a little strange, but it's an amazing thing.

It also sounds, if there were a duality here, I am conscious of being conscious. The subject, I, but that only appears in language. In fact, when you are conscious of being conscious, and that's a, it's a, it's a strange thing.

Just, and you can't, you can't say much about it. You can't, it just has no form and no shape. It's, it has, it's totally elusive and yet all pervasive.

Can you feel the fact that you are conscious, or rather that you are consciousness? And that's an, to, to sense yourself as that and still be able to perceive all this. And you have long since left compulsive labeling behind when you are aware of yourself as consciousness and then perceive as consciousness.

Labeling things mentally doesn't come in anymore. There's just consciousness and forms arising and subsiding in consciousness. Arising, some forms stay for a while.

This room stays as long as you sit here. This room arises in consciousness and then you leave and it subsides. But the voice, the words arise in consciousness and subside.

Arise, subside. We could call consciousness the, the eternal gap behind everything. The gap in between everything.

The space behind everything. Whatever you want to call it, these are just pointers. And there is a, an intense frequency that arises in you when you become aware of consciousness.

Very, a, it burns up, it, it makes the personal self fade out. It burns up the, even burns up the karmic accumulations in you. Old, old stuff from the past.

Pain body, old mind patterns. And your entire being is vibrating at a higher frequency. That's the only way I can put it.

The words may not be absolutely right, but that's how I sense it in you. And that is inherently joyful and energizing. To sense this essence in yourself.

And we are learning here not to have it as a very short-lived glimpse, but to be able to stay there. And every moment you stay in that, the old gets burned up in you. And you connect with intelligence, not the IQ intelligence that you measure in IQ tests.

That's a very limited form of intelligence. Creative intelligence, I talk about creative. This does not mean that you or I this moment will come up with the solution to the problem that Einstein couldn't solve.

The unified field theory or whatever it was. Nor does it mean that suddenly I can paint a masterpiece or compose an exquisite piece of music. Because these are not vehicles that have been prepared in this body, by this body.

But this intelligence can flow into something if there is a vehicle in your life, it can flow into that, transform it, and make it absolutely creative. And even that is no more than a bonus. For some people, it may be enough to walk around the planet for the rest of their life in this form, as peaceful, intensely alive beings that are astonished at the beauty of all things and bring that vibration of peace that comes with the awareness of pure consciousness.

Whoever they meet gets a little whiff of that. And for some humans, that's enough, and they fulfill their purpose here. Others may create some more elaborate forms, but empowered by not the ego, but by the greater intelligence it creates, it can flow into the human mind and body and create through the human form.

Let's come back to the simple secret. Be conscious that you are conscious. Feel the awareness as your essence.

And you will notice it's very still. The awareness is still. I compare it sometimes to space.

I call it inner space or space consciousness. It has no extension. It is vast, but not like the outer space that you see or that you don't see it, but that is there when you look at the sky at night.

The vastness of space is only a reflection in the external of who you are in the essence of your being. And that's the awe-inspiring thing when you look at the starry sky at night. The absolutely awe-inspiring thing that if you are really looking will really shut up your mind immediately because it's so astonishing.

That was my first meditation when I was in my teens. I'd had no idea it was meditation.

Lying on the deck of our, we lived on the top floor.

There was a little terrace. It was in the south of Spain where there were beautiful skies at night, totally clear, and I would lie and look at this. And there was no thought.

I had no idea that was going on then. I just, it was deeply enjoyable. The awe-inspiring thing is not the countless, countless suns that you see, which are stars, but the vastness of it, the nothingness that makes it all possible, the vastness of space, unimaginable infinity, and there too that can put you in touch with the vastness within you, just looking at that.

And space, again, is very similar. The outer space is very similar to inner space because both of them don't really, you cannot say that they exist because as I mentioned earlier, existence means to stand out, but space is, you can't say, oh, here's space. All you can ever be aware of is things in space.

And again, in yourself, you can't say, here is the essence of who I am. You cannot be aware of it as an object. All objects are things, forms that arise in the space.

Why can't you be aware of space? Because you are it. You cannot separate from it and look at it as an object.

It is the formless I, the I am that I am. The most profound statement in the entire Bible, which is, of course, a mixed bag of all kinds of writings, but there are some deep insights. You'd know how to find them.

When God is asked, what's your name? God says, I am that I am. That's my name.

It's the I am. So that immediately, there's space in you when you become conscious of being conscious. That is space.

In any situation you find yourself in, a quick access to inner space, spaciousness, essence, is to become conscious that you are conscious. That's presence. Then, yes, you are then still a person.

You can function as a person, but you are not trapped in the person. That's the hybrid I talked about. You function as the person.

We are not trapped in the person. And now for a little while, I'll say very little, and we just see if we can stay there in that consciousness of consciousness. Just for a little while.

Occasionally, I may say something just to point you back to it, because there is always a possibility that you may drift off into thinking. Oh, if any question comes into your mind right now, please realize that it is irrelevant. And please realize that it is an attempt of your mind to obstruct your practice of presence.

It's also quite helpful as you are aware of being conscious to be aware at the same time that you are breathing, to feel the breaths going in and out, and at the same time, be the consciousness, the presence. Thoughts are not important right now, even if they pretend to be. Don't be concerned if an occasional ripple of thought floats around the surface of your consciousness.

Not a problem. So when you go into a meditation like this, it can become very deep so that there's just consciousness left, pure consciousness. And then as you open your eyes again, listen, look around, begin to perceive externals again, it's still in the background.

This is a bit like to use a slightly funny analogy. You know the lines from Shakespeare, all the world's a stage and all the men and women are merely players and so on. So in a way, humans here are conditioned entities when presence has not yet arisen.

So they're acting out their scripts in a way, because without consciousness, you are a conditioned being and you are simply acting out your conditioning, very much like actors on the screen, on the movie screen. So I like to give this analogy, imagine the movie screen, people acting out their comedy or drama. And at some point, let's imagine one of the characters in the screen suddenly becomes aware of something, he becomes aware that what's real about me is actually the light.

And then he closes his eyes and he traces his origin back to the projector lamp, because that's how the illusion of the form is created. You have a movie projector and then you have a film. I think you still do, I don't know how technology has advanced these days, but you have a film that goes through that obstructs the light in some interesting ways.

So by creating movies, humans are replicating the play of universal consciousness. You obstruct the light and the obstructions of the light become the characters that you see on the screen. And each character on the screen believes in his or her complete independent reality as a separate entity and identifies with their story and their form until one character wakes up and says, wait a moment, what is this essence that I can sense?

And then his attention goes to her, and then you suddenly notice your essential reality as the light that's being projected onto the screen. I'm actually the light. And then the moment you realize that, you have connected with the source of the light.

You've realized your, you've always been connected, but you didn't know it. You've connected with the source of the light and realize your oneness with the source of the light. And that changes to continue for just one moment, this weird analogy, which becomes more and more unreal, that changes from now on, what the character does and how this character experiences life and how this character interacts with the other characters in the movie changes because he or she is aware of his or her essential identity.

So he behaves differently, not no longer his or her behavior is no longer based on the illusion of absolute separateness of the me entity. So his consciousness has linked back with the source of everything. And so that's the end of my analogy.

And that's really what's happening to you. And that's what Jesus was talking about when he said of himself, I am the light of the world. And when he said, talking to some of his disciples, you are the light of the world.

Now, his disciples were not important people, illiterate, most probably, fishermen or craftsmen, but they were not VIPs in this world. So he cannot have meant that they were special in any way on the level of form. So when he said, you are the light of the world, he didn't say you are very special VIPs.

No, he was pointing to something essential that is not the form, their essence. He was pointing to their essence as the light of the world. And the light of the world is consciousness, of course.

And that's what every spiritual teacher teaches, awareness of your source and your oneness with the source. And when you no longer live your life through the conceptualizing mind, then that awareness is there and it changes how you behave, how you perceive things, how you relate to other humans. So that's what happens really, when you become aware that you are consciousness.

The actor has become aware of his essential identity as the light of consciousness. And he or she may continue to play for a while in the world of form. And the quality of the movie actually improves with that consciousness.

The cheap melodrama of unconscious existence can actually become something quite beautiful. So it is vital to, in daily life, to remember that, remember is not the right word, let's use it anyway, language is so limited, to remember that you are consciousness, not to remember to be consciousness, to sense your essential reality as consciousness. And then more and more, it's there.

And that's what you teach. You then teach who or what you are. You become the teaching.

You demonstrate through your behavior, your words and your silences, you demonstrate and it spreads from there. It's wonderful to see the one consciousness awakening in so many beautiful forms. We will meet again in the morning.

In the meantime, another little moment of complete stillness. We'll close our eyes, finish in your own time. I'll be with you for a little while.

And then probably when you open your eyes, the chair will be empty. Apparently, I got up rather abruptly at the end of our last session, and people said, is something wrong? I

didn't even know I got up abruptly, the body got up and walked out.

And we have perhaps, well, not perhaps, we have some questions. I know there are some on paper and some in heads, your heads, some of your heads. Without insulting anybody, I just like to mention that no question is really that important.

What about my question? Well, mine is important. So the question has to be seen within the larger context.

And what is the larger context? It's the space. It's more important than any thought within the space.

And we are here to transcend thought within ourselves. But of course, thought still appears from time to time. A question may have relative importance, but not absolute importance.

It's also helpful not to have self-identification with question, which is self-identification with thought, which is ego, because it happens to be, come out of your head, and it's my question. And once you have identified, which is very normal, with some thought, like a question, if that question is overlooked, and the likelihood of your question being overlooked is greater than the likelihood of your question being answered, because there are many more questions than we can possibly answer here. And so you feel overlooked because your question is overlooked, and then the ego then feels diminished.

Almost insulted, as if something had been taken away. And again, it's normal, normal unconsciousness. And why does it happen?

Well, it's self-identification with thought, and so you need some kind of thought to respond to your thought, to feel enhanced in your sense of self. And then if the question does get chosen, then the ego says, oh, he chose my question. It's normal.

Perhaps many of you are not at that stage anymore, so I'm only mentioning to just a few who may still experience that. But the egos are weird creatures. They can even then get angry because my question wasn't chosen, and don't hear the rest of the session, the next session.

And our task is not to lose ourselves, and this always applies when you begin to use your mind, not to lose ourselves in the form consciousness, talking, questions, answers, and get completely drawn into that, and then lose all sense of space around it. So as we speak here, it's vital to have one foot, so to speak, in the spaciousness, and one foot in form, formlessness and form. And perhaps that brings us to just one question that I saw a few minutes ago is coming to mind at this moment.

So that seems to be the first question then to start with. It's on paper. Some questions, by the way, are also from people who are elsewhere on the planet.

Online, it's called, apparently. All these expressions, I only have a vague idea what they mean. Downloading online, and uploading, and...

Well, it's all very well this question coming to mind at this moment, but it also has to come into my hands. Anyway, it's not in my hands, but I know what it is. And it's a question about how do we, what does it mean to have space in a relationship?

How do we actually bring space, as I sometimes put it, the questioner asks, how practically, can you give practical advice? That's actually the question. Can you give practical advice on how to bring space into the relationship?

Because space is vital in any relationship, not just the so-called close, intimate relationships, but all kinds of relationships, from friends, to lovers, to friends, to acquaintances, to people you meet casually in the street. But especially, I think the questioner was especially referring to intimate relationships. Of course, there's a beautiful line in Khalil Gibran's book, *The Prophet*, which says, let there be space, or spaces, I think space, let there be space in your togetherness.

As this is the recipe for a good relationship. This is just a line out from that, these little prose poems that he wrote. Let there be space in your togetherness.

So, it comes down quite simply to your ability to have that space within yourself where you're not imposing thoughts on your partner. Or, to put it differently, where you're not looking at him or her through any kind of thought, mental concept. That space, when you can be with another human being, not constantly, but when it's possible from time to time, during the day, have brief moments of spacious togetherness when you, for example, listen to the other, even the other maybe just saying a few sentences or telling a little story of what happened, or telling how he or she feels.

And as you listen, you're not thinking. So, to have space in relation, it presupposes that the ability within you to access the space of presence. And then you can look at the other and be that pure, aware consciousness and not a person.

No matter, now, it does not matter whether the other person is also in that state or that moment or not. It's a beautiful thing if both can be in the state of pure presence. So, you can intersperse your relationship with spaces of pure togetherness when the need to function on the level of thought, and even on the level of emotion, is transcended for those spaces that arise.

It's deeper than the emotion, too, a very deep sense of oneness. So, looking at the other, whether the other is silent or speaking, and be silent inside while you listen, or look, or listen, and look, or touch. That is, you're bringing, you become the space.

So, to have space in the relationship, you need to embody the space. You need to become the space for the other person. The other, that lifts the relationship to a different

dimension where you transcend mind, ego.

You transcend also the emotion. There may be an emotional bond, but at that moment, that also is transcended. There's a deeper sense of oneness there.

So, one thing is listening or looking at the other while they do something, or a beautiful sharing from time to time, look into the other person's eyes, and then you see no judgment, no thought, just a beautiful, just a presence. And if you can both do it, it's even more beautiful. It's then a deep sharing of oneness, of one field of consciousness where the body becomes unimportant.

Looking into each other's eyes, not overdoing it, of course, but, and that, I practice that in virtually any relationship, whether I meet, I don't practice it, it's so natural, you can't really call it practice, but it's, I don't think when I relate to a person unless that person asks a question, then perhaps as an answer, some thought arises that then becomes a word or words coming out of my mouth.

But while I listen or look, there's no thinking. And that's why every encounter becomes actually quite enjoyable when you're not thinking, but when you are space. I sometimes call it, I haven't used that expression yet, here, today or yesterday, I sometimes call that space consciousness, as opposed to object consciousness, which is thoughts.

Space consciousness is not a term from science fiction, nor is it to do with acid trips. It's something very real. Space consciousness is just another word for your essence identity.

And what we share here, why you are here, why I am here is to share basically space consciousness. Our essence. That's why we're here, to deepen that, so that it becomes familiar living in connectedness with that dimension.

That's why we're here. And the rest of it is simply addressing possible, very common obstacles to the arising of space consciousness. How object consciousness can keep you in its grasp.

And if you don't recognize how it does that, and we're talking here about, of course, about ego, then you can very easily be deceived by the egoic consciousness or space consciousness, because it has its little tricks with every thought. As you know, I mentioned before, every thought says, follow me. And so it tries to pull your attention in completely.

This is so important. I must think about this, says the thought. Not verbally, but it's implied.

It's 4.30 in the morning, but now I have to think about this. This is so neat. If my life will fall apart if I don't work that out right now, it's about my life.

Now, we already looked at that in the earlier session, the illusory nature of saying my life when you have a stream of thinking, which you call my life. That's identification with object consciousness. So we need to look at how easily that arises, how it pulls you in, so you can recognize it when the pull comes, a thought comes, says, give me attention.

And it can get hold, especially old thoughts that have been around for years, lodged in your mind, some deep seated thoughts of whatever it is. I don't know what it is. You are no good, or I can never forgive that person.

Or I'm a victim of life, whatever it is. And that comes again, and you were spacious, and then suddenly this entity comes in and goes. And you can see how you disappear.

Your presence becomes obscured, and you disappear into the thought. Your entire consciousness is absorbed by form. That's ego.

And so, people who are deeply trapped in ego, you can see them, you can recognize it. They are not there. There's something there, but it's a thought formation.

And they don't see you when they look. There's no space for you. It's just, there might even be some kind of role-playing, but it's all part of egoic consciousness.

There's, so not to space with the other, look at each other, touch sometimes without just being with that. Listen, watch the other move, and go about doing this or that, and just be there as a silent watcher. It's beautiful.

So, you can, of course, more formally meditate together as a formal thing, or just be still together. It's lovely. Let's be still together.

Go for a walk in stillness, all these things. But primarily, space always means a break in the stream of thought. And then, whenever I just got sidetracked, whenever I look at another human being, I am the space.

I'm not the person. And that's primarily your task also. So, be alert in any interaction to see whether it's, is it dominated by thought, or is it, is there space?

And when you are functioning as when you have a particular function in this world, a job or whatever, you may be playing a certain role. You are the salesperson, or you are the, whatever you do, the manager of this or that, and the other person is the employee, or the other person is the client or the customer. These are the roles that, of course, you play the roles, that's part of it, but don't lose yourself in the role.

So, if you are the customer and you approach somebody about something that's not right, so make sure there is space while you interact. There is a human being behind the role. Don't accept the roles that society gives you, or a social situation gives you, because then you function as the role.

So, when you're dealing with hotel staff, for example, in this situation, it's very easy to behave like a hotel guest talking to a member of staff, which is also true. That's on the level of form. But is there a deeper interaction between two human beings also?

That is more important, and that is the space. So, that must be part of the interaction. Otherwise, you're lost in form, you're lost in roles.

One more question from here, and then we'll have a question from any one of you. Now, there are a few similar questions here, so I'll take this one as a representative of other questions that are very much alike. Now, this one expresses it in this way.

Why allurement to thinking by the universe? To be allurement is the word. It means why, is that a word that exists?

It's on paper, it must exist. No. Why does, let's rephrase it, what's the purpose of thinking if we have to transcend thinking, or if it's our destiny to go beyond, or if it causes so much trouble, why does thinking arise in the universe?

Now, it is, as you might have noticed, the universe is very busy creating continuously multiplicities of life forms on this planet, and I'm sure in many other places in the universe, as there are several billion suns in our galaxy alone, and billions of galaxies, so the universe delights in creating form, and it creates the human form, and one way in which the universe explores the multiplicity, diversity, and differentiation of life forms is through human thinking. It's a very interesting way of experiencing itself, and when I say universe, I mean life, I mean the one that becomes the many without losing its essential oneness.

So the one creates these bodies, and through these bodies and these brains, it moves through the brains that it created and experiences the universe through thinking. So the experience of its creations becomes extremely differentiated through thinking. It's an incredible thing.

It's a wonderful thing. So you get thinking, be entities. It creates thinking entities, and then the game continues.

The thinking entities develop the thinking ability more and more. And they speak, they write books, and they discuss, and you can see how, and the universe must delight in this, and the drama suddenly arises, whoa, and of course, for it to really work, the thinking entities need to forget who they really are, which is expressions of the one, but if they remember that, it wouldn't really, it wouldn't be a real thing. It has to be the real thing.

So they have to forget who they are temporarily. So the entity loses itself in thought, becomes thought. It's as expressed in the biblical creation myths, where they eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and that, to me, means the differentiation of

judgment, good, bad, thinking ability arises.

Wonderful thing, on the one hand, but of course, on the other hand, you lose paradise for a while. So more and more over millennia, thinking becomes more and more important, so that eventually you're totally identified with that movement of thought. An interesting thing anthropologists found that there's this, I believe, I have an intuitive sense that this is true.

Some anthropologists, although others don't agree with it, say that when thinking first arose in humans, they thought they were being spoken to by entities. Gods would talk in their heads. Now you pick up the weapon and kill him.

Yes, I'll do that. Not realizing thoughts are arising. And so it must have been an incredible thing to experience that at first, very disconcerting.

Suddenly, voice starts up in your head. Imagine how your dog would feel if suddenly he or she started thinking. Mm-hmm.

Somebody talking in my head. And suddenly, your dog wouldn't have an opinion about you. And very soon, the tail would no longer wag because the dog would see how big your ego is.

And the dog would have lost paradise. But unfortunately, the dog is still in paradise, which means natural connectedness with being. Humans moved through the thinking stage, but the universe is getting tired now.

Why do I know that? I got tired. That means the universe must have been getting tired of thinking because the suffering, it's too much that's created when you'd continuously lose yourself in the mind.

And so the next stage arises, which is even more wondrous, much more wondrous, which is waking up out of thinking and realizing for the first time how wondrous all this is, which before was taken for granted when you hadn't arrived at thinking yet. It was just, everything was nature, everything was natural. You were part of nature.

There was no concept of nature and humans. It was all part of the undifferentiated oneness, the same way in which animals still experience reality, the universe. So that happened.

Now, an even more wondrous thing happens. Thinking has, to a large extent, outlived its usefulness as an exploration of the one, although it will continue for quite a while, but it will no longer be dominant because the one is now embarking on a different experiment or experience, and that is a deep recognition of that which was lost, the state of connectedness with being. But when something that is lost is found again after a long time, the reconnection happens at a much deeper level.

There is an added dimension of depths there that my dog does not have, although the dog is naturally connected. When you transcend thinking, you reconnect, so to speak, and there's the dimension of deep knowing there of the sacredness and the miraculous nature of all things and the essence of all things, as expressed in the, I believe it was Wayne Dyer the other day who quoted it, as I was having a dialogue with him, a little poem by T.S. Eliot, which I also love, which goes, and let us not cease from exploration, and at the end of all our exploring, arrive where we started and know the place for the first time.

That, of course, is also, is true of both human beings in their individual journey because they only reflect in their individual journey the larger cosmic journey. So these lines refer to human beings, individual lives. They also refer to the entire life of the cosmos.

It's a wonderful, wonderful thing. So you arrive where you started and then you know the place for the first time. So that's the function of thinking.

We are in the midst of the transitional, well, not perhaps in the midst yet because 90% of humans are not yet going through the awakening process on the planet as a whole. In some places on the planet, more than up to 20% are going through the awakening process. I haven't done any research on that because you couldn't.

It would be hard to do, but my intuitive sense is that. By the way, I can usually, I can be wrong occasionally, but usually by looking at another human being in a room or sitting somewhere going past, I can usually tell whether they are going already through the awakening process or not. How, I don't know.

I just know. But I have been wrong a few times too. So we could talk more about thinking, but I don't think that is necessary.

Hope, just before we have a live question, there's one of the questioners, there's a question about hope. Let's see if I can find it. Oh, I can't find it.

It's here. But the question said, what about hope? You said you used the word hope the other day when you were talking about your dog.

I must have said, I hope my dog lives a little longer. Is there a place for hope? For some people, hope is extremely important.

I use hope in a casual way, in a casual sense. Hope is not something that helps you to be present. It's hope.

When hope dominates your consciousness, then of course you are looking to some future moment for freedom or fulfillment or satisfaction, and you're missing this. Does not mean you cannot casually say, I hope you're feeling better. You can use these words.

And of course, I hope if you're not well, and the next day I call you or I leave a message on your phone, why not say, I really do hope that you're feeling better? I also hope if I'm ill, I hope that I will get better. I can say that casually, but I can still totally accept that this moment is as it is.

And I'm not devastating if the hope is not fulfilled. So you can put all your attention on the hope, in which case you lose yourself in future, or you can use the word casually, but be totally present and accepting of what is anyway. If my dog dies, then they surrender.

And if the dog lives, it's beautiful. Eventually every form dissolves. But don't live on hope.

Do, because there's always a, oh, it's, I hope one day my life is going to be better. But what about now? And of course it might be better on the level of form.

Maybe it will get better. Maybe you will move to a better place, a nicer place. Maybe you will fall in love and live happily ever after.

Is there water coming in? But there's a crack, a crack in everything that's, that's not only how the water gets in, but also the light in. So don't live in hope, knowing that things may get better, but if you don't access that which is beyond form, what happens is things get better for a while until they get worse again.

There's a continuous change of forms. You gain something until it's taken away from you or you have to let go or it dissolves in your hands because all forms come and go. It's a continuous flux.

So yes, of course they can get better, but not as some ultimate answer or solution to your life. It's simply how things work on the level of form. Things come, things go, things grow, things thrive.

But they can't thrive forever on the level of form. The economy is growing and growing and every day we are doing so well, the economy every year grows by so many percentage points and it grows and grows until the planet is gets choked by the economy and what it entails and can't breathe anymore. But it's so economic use is excellent that the news keeps saying, no they're not, it's an imaginary situation because it can't happen.

You have growth and you have shrinkage and growth, shrinkage, birth, death, decay, these come always together. So hope is fine, but knowing there's no ultimate fulfillment in anything that happens out there in any form. You have to access the formless, which is in the now, nowhere else.

And so you have to find the vertical dimension into the space as the essence of who you are, which is consciousness itself. And then you can casually say, I hope there's not, I

hope we're not going to get flooded completely here. And if we do get flooded, that's fine too, we'll take action.

I assume there's a beautiful downpour outside unless it's a water pipe, but I believe it's these wonderful downpours that you get here. And then 10 minutes later, sunshine. And you enjoy them all, you enjoy every moment.

Let's see if there's a question that the people are running towards. There's Greg and there's Aaron, and they are running towards you and they will select a few, one or two people to come, first person is on its way. In the meantime, we are present.

Okay.

[Speaker 4] (4:30:59 - 4:31:06)

Got it, okay. Eckhart, on any average day, how much in the presence are you able to be?

[Speaker 1] (4:31:09 - 4:31:12)

Oh, me? You.

[Speaker 4] (4:31:13 - 4:31:17)

I guess I'm wondering what's possible for a mere mortal.

[Speaker 1] (4:31:17 - 4:35:36)

Okay. And then you tell me about yourself too. Okay.

There's always space consciousness. The intensity varies. Sometimes it's in the background.

So I may be dealing with some stuff in the foreground, sorting out papers, looking at trying to do something on the iPad. Or there may be some problem arising, so-called problem outside. So let's see, how do we do that?

What do you deal with that? So the intensity is in the background, there's a space, in other words, nothing that happens out there, I take terribly seriously. Not that I laugh all the time about things, no, I look quite serious sometimes, but it's not, I know it's not that serious if there's a problem out there.

So you deal with it, you give it attention, you give it its due. But there's always a space consciousness in the background somewhere. But that, so that happens when there's something to deal with.

And then enormous variation depending on the moment I interact with another human being, there's an intensification. When there's a personal interaction and I look at

someone, there's immediately more. Often in nature, there's more.

Often in chaotic situations, there's more. In the middle of traffic, there's more. When something goes drastically wrong, so to speak, much more intense.

So if, for example, we had an earthquake here right now, hopefully, hopefully not, there would be very, just a very intense presence and in teaching situations also, another, there's an intensification of presence that comes with what is required at this moment, really the presence that arises according to what really is required in the present moment. So it's like a dimmer switch that goes up, it goes down, but the light doesn't go off, it goes up and down. So in another way of putting it is, you can be, there's the person, there's the object consciousness of the person and there's the space consciousness of the essential being of consciousness itself.

So in this situation here, it's virtually 100% space consciousness. This is not the person, the personal self really talking, it's consciousness using this mind to speak through. I don't say that I channel as such, but it is similar to that.

I don't channel as such, I don't have the sense that there's not an entity speaking through me, but there is source, the source speaking through me, through this form. So in a teaching situation, 100% in other situations, maybe less, there's a little bit of the person there, but there's space around the person. And so, what about you?

[Speaker 4] (4:35:37 - 4:35:38)

I'm getting there.

[Speaker 1] (4:35:39 - 4:35:44)

Yes, good. So there's already space in you, in your life, in daily life.

[Speaker 4] (4:35:45 - 4:35:50)

I think about it all the time. I don't practice it all the time, but I do try to think about it, be aware of it.

[Speaker 1] (4:35:50 - 4:50:03)

Thanks to you. Yes, so the awareness is there. Okay.

And are you able to find spaces of no thought at all? For example, now? Yeah.

That's fine. That is wonderful. It doesn't really matter how long they are initially, the spaces of no thought.

You can just, you open a little space and that is no thought. You can even use this gesture because it's a little added, almost a symbolic gesture, a physical pointer to

something that's of course beyond the physical. When you go like this during the day occasionally, perhaps when nobody else is looking at you, there's a space.

So this represents the space between the hands, this represents the space of no thought. And you can hold that. It sounds, it looks almost like Qigong, but you go even deeper to just that space of no thought.

It's beautiful. And so you can practice with that and you can then miraculously feel your mind actually has stopped and you're fully aware. There's no, nothing, no voice anymore.

Just enormous, enormous power you've just accessed. The mind doesn't recognize that. The conceptual mind says, what's the point in that?

How does that solve my problems? Doesn't realize that that's the, it's far beyond anything the mind could understand, the conceptual mind. This is pure, another way of putting it, this is pure intelligence.

And that's only one word for it. It's primordial intelligence, the intelligence that underlies all of creation. It is the unborn, it is the unmanifested.

What the Buddha pointed to. So, and there it is. You can, even as a little practice, again, as a little external help, later you don't need it anymore, as a little external help, when you are walking somewhere, either in nature or in a town or a city, you know, if you're walking somewhere, look at the next tree or lamppost, let's say it's a few steps away, like the end of the stage here.

And as you're walking towards that tree or lamppost, that becomes the space for you in which you are just present and not thinking. So you hope that becomes the external space for the inner space. So as you're walking, and there you are, you had a space of no thought, and then you can look at the next one if you like, or you can go back into thinking.

But it's so beautiful and empowering, you will want to have more of that in your life, to be yourself more, more and more deeply, more fully. So little things you can use as transitional, helpful devices, pointers that help you to bring that into your life. So you can do it here.

You can choose also one activity, if it's not too long, it's not an activity that takes 20 minutes, you will probably lose yourself in thought quite soon. But an activity that is just 20 seconds, half a minute or one minute, and choose whenever you perform that activity, choose to be present with it, to feel what it is you're doing. This is the ancient, the idea underlying the Japanese practices of the tea ceremony, of flower arrangement.

There are these, why these practices originally arose is as a vehicle for a state of

consciousness, a vehicle for presence. So with the tea ceremony, now, of course, what happens after centuries of practice, the things become formalized. And when they become more and more formal, the original essence and purpose behind it can easily get lost.

And so, for example, another example of that is the certain simple instruments. In Japan, they have the shakuhachi flute. The shakuhachi flute is a simple piece of bamboo with a few holes in it.

And you play these beautiful notes on it with silences in between. And it's originally intuitive and played by Zen monks as part of their practice. And then some of them are just wonderful to listen to.

It's not only the playing, even when you listen to it, it puts you in that state of consciousness of pure presence if you pay more attention to the spaces than to the sounds. That's what it's there for, for you to become aware of the space. And, of course, after several centuries, you now get professional musicians who play the shakuhachi technically beautifully, but the underlying state of consciousness isn't there.

And you can sense that when you listen to it. So, occasionally, you still have shakuhachi played with the underlying state of presence, but when professional musicians play it, often, yes, technically very good, but the essence is missing. So, again, tea ceremony, you can have your own tea ceremony.

You don't need to learn anything about it. It just means, basically, again, you invite presence into your life by using any action that is not a means to an end. Any physical action that you perform, if it's not a means to an end, like making a cup of tea, usually the end is drinking the tea and everything else is a step towards that.

But that can be, it doesn't have to be like that. You can, with every movement, you can be fully present. You fill the water, the kettle up with water.

The lid goes down. The kettle, pick it up, put it there. Either it goes on the gas fire or electric, switch on, and after half a minute, you begin to hear the noise.

You open the cupboard, you take out a box of tea, either bags or tea, put it into the pot, and again, presence, you're present with every movement. It's beautiful. And then the water is ready, and then you pick that up, and it goes, and your senses are also awake, so you listen to the sounds, you feel the touch, and it's become a meditation.

In other words, it's not a means to an end. Any movement is fully self-contained. It's not in order to arrive there.

It's an end in itself. And that's, again, it's a practice that you can choose any simple activity. It can be extremely short.

It can be three seconds. If you only had a few, 10 times a day, five seconds of presence is a huge gain in consciousness. I'm giving you a minute.

Press the elevator button to call the elevator. And if you can, be present until it comes. And if you can, you might even be present while you're traveling in it, up or down.

So if you use an elevator at work, every day, somewhere, why not make that into presence practice? Every time you use it, presence, alert. It's no longer a means to an end, because the absurd thing about the unconscious egoic state is that virtually everything you do is a means to something else, which always pretends to be more important than the thing you're doing now.

It's a very strange way to live. It's always the next thing is, unconsciously, the next thing is always believed to be essentially more important than the thing you're doing now that is supposed to lead you to the next thing. But when you arrive at the next thing, you can't appreciate it because the mental pattern is always next.

Then already you have the next thing. And that's why people miss their whole lives, because they live for the next thing. No, if you spend your whole life living for the next thing, where's your life?

You've been waiting for the next thing. And then you reach the age of 80. Where's the next thing?

Still waiting for the next thing. So again, inviting presence into your life, no longer living for the next thing, because what does it mean when we say the next thing? What is the next thing?

The next thing is a thought in your head. That's what future is. The future moment is what we call the future moment.

This is vitally important. The future moment is the only reality it has, if we can even call it reality, is it's a thought in your head of the future that I need to get to. Because the future has no reality except as a thought.

Because when it becomes real, it's the present. There is only the present ever. There is no future.

Not the greatest philosopher could argue with the simple fact that every human being requires very little intelligence. Every human being can verify in their own lives that they have never experienced the future. Or have they?

No, you can't. How can you experience the future? You can only ever experience the present moment.

But you live as if something called the future were more important. And so what is that

thing that pretends to be more important than the only thing there is? Thinking.

It's a thought. Future is a thought. There is no future except for the thought of future.

So a sign then to live for the next moment means to be identified. We come back to where we started, to be identified with your mind, to be trapped in object consciousness, in thought. So the more you are trapped in thought, the less space there is in you, the more you will be obsessed by getting to the next moment or the one after that, which promises fulfillment and which you never find.

Amazing, amazing. I've spoken about it many times, but every time I say it, I'm amazed.

[Speaker 4] (4:50:04 - 4:50:04)

But.

[Speaker 1] (4:50:10 - 4:50:19)

Thank you. Perhaps another question from the audience.

[Speaker 3] (4:50:21 - 4:50:44)

Oh, it's one person there. Yes. I find in trying to be present, I often feel tremendously alone.

Sorry, tremendously? Tremendously alone, a strong sense of loneliness. And the more I meditate, I find at the moment at least, everything feels dissatisfying.

Even the most pleasurable experience feels dissatisfying in some way.

[Speaker 1] (4:50:45 - 4:50:45)

Yes.

[Speaker 3] (4:50:46 - 4:51:45)

I find myself craving a sense of companionship, rather like Christians talk about having a companion for God or something that gives direction and helps making order and decisions. Yes. But instead I'm finding myself more and more with this sort of deep sense of aloneness and anxiety.

And my response is becoming more to become a workaholic rather than actually being present. And I was wondering if you could give some advice. Yes.

On the external level, do you live alone or do you live with people? I live alone and I'm probably as happy as I ever have been. Happy?

Basically, except inside there's a sense of I'm running away from now. Yes. So all the

outside stuff is dandy, but when I'm actually present, something feels deeply unhappy.

Uh-huh. Uh-huh.

[Speaker 1] (4:51:52 - 5:31:57)

Now, as you know, there's a loneliness and there is solitude. Loneliness means you're alone, but longing not to be alone. And solitude means you're alone and completely surrendered to that state of being alone.

I wonder if you are able to really yet take your attention into the present moment, for example, by directing the focus of your attention, as we were suggesting today, to simple sense perceptions, or to your breathing, or to the feeling of aliveness inside your body, all things that bring you into the present moment, a largeness to sense perceptions, breath, feeling the aliveness that is there, that pervades your body, starting perhaps with your hands, feeling, are they alive? Can I feel the life inside my hands? Close your eyes for a moment.

Yes, can feel. Hard to describe what it is, but there's an aliveness there. Can I feel it in my feet?

Yes. Can I feel it in the rest of my body? Yes, I'm beginning to feel it there.

So, and then you're really, so make sure your attention actually moves into the present moment. And then, if then a sense, that means if you do it correctly, thought slows down and begins to subside. You're entering the present moment.

If then what you describe persists, a certain deep seated feeling of dissatisfaction, dissatisfaction, incompleteness, or not enough, what you do with that is you accept it the way it is rather than wishing that you were not feeling it. So you, the next step, but if so, first present moment, and then what is left when you bring your attention fully to the present moment, if that's left, what you do with it is you bring an acceptance to it in the similar way that you would accept, let's say you find yourself at home and suddenly a very unpleasant noise starts up outside. One of these drills, for example.

What do you do with it? You can't go out and say, stop. No, they have vital work to do.

So at that moment, I'm giving an external example. The same can be applied to the inner, something that doesn't feel good, but all you can do, you either suffer or you surrender, which surrender means you give it space to be, you accept it. And suddenly, let's stay with the drill for a moment.

Suddenly the drill continues. There was the irritation that you felt when you couldn't accept it. Your mind said something about it, how dreadful it is.

Why do I have to live in this place? It's the second time this week, this goes on. Why

can't I find a place that's more peaceful?

Et cetera, et cetera, et cetera. Emotions come to respond to your thoughts. And then suddenly you realize what you're doing.

And you say, okay, let's see what happens if I completely accept that that is there, because that's obviously, there's nothing else I can do about it except create suffering for myself. And you accept the noise continues, and suddenly you become aware of space, spaciousness. And suddenly you feel peaceful with the noise.

This also means you have become internally independent of the external condition. A wonderful sense of freedom suddenly comes. The external condition can no longer determine your state of consciousness because you surrender.

And now we can move, let's move to the inner. Something arises in you that perhaps has lived inside you for many years. And perhaps it's an old feeling, an old emotion that is an energy formation inside you, a sense of deep lack.

And what do you do? There it is. That's your inner unpleasant noise, so to speak.

And what you do is bring, you accept that that's what you feel. You let it be, as the song says, let it be. There it is.

You become the space for it. So anything that you accept means you become the space for it. In other words, you realize there is more to you than the reaction, than the person that reacts.

The spaciousness comes the moment you completely accept any condition brings you to spaciousness. And then you feel peaceful despite the condition. And that's an incredible thing to be, and it almost sounds paradoxical that you can feel something inside you that doesn't feel good, but as you completely accept it, there is space around it, so to speak.

And then you realize that you, that space is more essentially you than the condition that you experience. That's an amazing realization. The spaciousness around the condition is more truly who you are because it's your essence than the condition that before made up your sense of who you are.

So you have to work with surrender to whatever arises as long as you do not fuel the condition with unconscious thinking, which means you're not present at all. So first you become present and what then, what still persists when you are present, you have to surrender to. So make sure you don't create the inner obstacle by unconscious thinking how lonely you are and that other people have relationships and you are the only one who doesn't have a relationship and whatever else your mind is saying, that means it's unconsciousness, you can't get out that way.

So you can only, before you can surrender, you have to become present and see what's left when you are present. You may be on the physical, emotional level, you may be longing for companionship that at the moment you don't have. It is possible because we are not complete as entities, we are male or female and so you long for the opposite.

That applies even in gay relationships, there are opposites. So on the physical level, you may long for this physical form, may want to feel the closeness of another physical form. Or on an emotional level, you may want to feel the closeness, the emotional closeness to another human being that again is a natural thing.

And if you have no access to the essence of who you are, then if those longings or physical emotional needs are not met, you become a very unhappy human being. For if for some reason they are not met, so there's longing for closeness, physical and emotional, even sexual longing can be part of that, it's not being met. If you have no access to space, the space within you, then your life seems terribly impoverished.

Similar to, for example, every woman carries in the physical vehicle, which is built in the desire to give birth is part of the physical form. Now, those who are not, who are totally identified with their physical form for their sense of self, if that is denied to you for some reason by life, you become very unhappy. And in some cultures where people identify you totally with the physical, when you're a woman, you are primarily a woman in some older cultures.

You're not a human being primarily, you're primarily a woman. And so you have to get married and have children. And if you're not married and have children, you're despised virtually.

You're assigned a particular role, a form identity, and if you don't comply for some reason, you have little value in that society. But if you go beyond the form and access the space, then even if these needs are not met, the physical need, for example, of the female form to give birth, or other needs on a physical emotional level of proximity, you can still continue to feel the longing without being consumed by it and without it making you unhappy. And that's a strange thing.

You can, for a while, you can coexist with that longing that is not met and still on a deeper level be in surrender. And that also, not giving birth to a child as a woman, if you are totally identified with your form identity, which is the physical vehicle, then they feel something missing. And some women who cannot give birth become very unhappy.

But if they access that which is beyond the form, then a little bit of unfulfillment remains within the vast space that you are. And that's the unfulfillment of the physical form. You can live with that.

You can live with. But the vastness of who you are beyond the form is there. Around it.

And so you feel peaceful about it. You can even feel peaceful about the physical longing. And as you become peaceful, by the way, it's much more likely that some human being will be drawn to you because humans are drawn to other humans who embody that peaceful state of consciousness.

And so on that deepest level, you don't need anything. On the level of essence, you don't need anything. On the level of form, there are some needs which may or may not be met by life.

So that's the practice. Thank you. Thank you.

Let's see, I haven't read any, sorry, any question online, online. It doesn't say where it comes from, but somewhere on the planet. There are several questions here.

I'll just take one or two. Oh, there's a question about space that I already answered, space in a relationship. And there's a question about being depressed and acceptance, that seems the question that has just been asked.

So somebody else on the planet has a similar problem to yours, at least one. I have autism that's increasing apparently. The cases of autism are increasing tremendously.

I have autism and practicing presence has slowed my thoughts and helped me feel peace. But I have a hard time bringing attention to my physical body, which often initially feels uncomfortable. What would you suggest to help bring awareness to my body?

That's easy. But it may not be so easy for you to take your attention out of the head. And I always start with one hand.

If you're right-handed, the right hand, otherwise the left hand. And for a person suffering from autism, this may not be that easy for anybody else. It's relatively easy, unless you're totally, many people are actually, totally.

And feel, the simple question is when you close your eyes, how do you know that I have a left or a right hand, whichever hand you choose? If the hand is not touching anything, how can I know whether I have a hand? Is there any way of me, without moving it or touching it, is there any way I can know whether I have a hand?

That question, the mind may superficially answer it and say, yes, because I just saw it. But that's not the answer, because you have to know in the moment, in this moment, how can I know? And the question takes your attention, which for many people is absorbed by thought in their heads, but to give an answer to it, your attention has to step out of thought and travel into your hand.

Some of your consciousness has to remove itself from thought, plook, plop. And it goes

in here. And then suddenly you feel an aliveness, a very subtle aliveness, even sometimes tingling or warmth in your hand.

And then you can truly answer, yes, now I know that I have a hand. And that's the beginning of having attention in the body. If you can do it with one hand, you can also feel the other hand, it becomes easier.

And suddenly you have attention there in both hands. And you feel more alive already, and it's only the hands. And then can you feel your feet?

Okay, you may have to close again. Some attention has to travel there. Yes, and there, and feel.

And then what about the legs? And yes, arms. And then it becomes more diffused throughout the entire body.

I believe it was the first time with a spiritual teacher called Zong Klein, who called it, I think, a global sense of aliveness, global, so entire being. And that, it's an enormously, you feel so alive suddenly. And that's the entry point into the formless.

It's, you're already going deeper than the physical. So at first, what you touch is the, the life energy, the chi, and you begin to feel that it becomes alive. You feel it more strongly.

But the chi is the, as I call it, the bridge between the world of form, physical and other psychic forms, and the formless. So when you touch chi, you're already on the bridge to the formless. Chi is the aliveness inside you, and the aliveness in every being.

So as you put your attention into the body, you feel an intensification of life energy. That's the chi. But you're also on your way to accessing that which has no form already.

The chi is half form and half formless. And as you go deeper, you actually, after a while, if you did it with your eyes closed, you lose sense of feet, legs, hand, arms, and it becomes all that's left is a feeling of intense aliveness. But the mental image of body disappears, and what was before the inner body becomes a sense of aliveness that has no extension in time and space anymore.

It's just aliveness. So you've moved into the realm of the formless. That's how the body, the inner body, can be a portal for you to move into the formless, because that's the essence of every form is the formless, the one, God, the uncreated, or the universe before it became form, form, before the Big Bang.

No scientist can go there. The moment they ask, what was there before the Big Bang when it all started? Nothing.

But how is that possible? How can, let's think about that. Can't.

But you can experience that reality of that initial nothing in yourself, because it never went away. It still remains at the core of every form, the one formless nothingness. And so that's a beautiful, that was really getting in touch with the inner body as a spiritual practice, very powerful.

You can teach it to your grandmother or your parents who may not want to hear about anything spiritual. Don't talk to them about the formless or spirit, but you can say to your grandmother or mother who is tortured by her mind, can you feel the life in your hands? Let's have a little game.

Can ask her, can you feel the life in your hands? What do you mean? Do you want to just try it, try?

There, oh, yeah, yeah, I can feel it. Now what? Okay, do it again.

And so gradually you take her attention. I'm just taking an example of your grandma, could be anybody. And it's a beautiful thing.

They don't know it's spiritual. Don't mention the word. So that's the embodiment and also movement helps as some of you have been doing the presence through movement with Kim.

Movement can also help getting in touch with that inner aliveness. And for the autistic person that asked the question, I would also recommend that you take up an actual practice, physical practice, presence through movement, Tai Chi, yoga, Qigong, whatever it is that involves movement. And that can be a help to bring body awareness to make it possible for you to get out of the head.

Let's take one question from paper. Okay, here we have a question. My pain body is violent, destructive, and terrifying, and it tends to completely take me over with its power.

I try to just witness it or stay present, but it consumes me. I live in a constant state of fear and anxiety to the point where life doesn't seem worth living. Can you comment?

Very heavy pain body. You get completely taken over by it in certain situations. Presence is lost.

What to do? I very rarely recommend remembering something or going into the past, but one helpful thing that you can do is when you're alone or with someone who is fairly present or conscious, remember the last incident that triggered your pain body. Remember how it started.

And then you may begin to feel the emotion that goes with it, but it won't be quite as strong. It may be strong, but it won't be quite as strong as when it actually happened.

But you still can visualize what happened and you can feel the emotion.

Some people can even feel strong emotion when they remember how 20 or 30 years ago they were bullied at school. You remember the bully and what he did, and you go through the motion, and suddenly you feel this enormous anger. That's a good opportunity for practice.

So if you remember an incident or the typical kind of incident, if there is a typical incident that tends to trigger the pain body, bring it up in your memory and feel the emotion, and then it's not quite as powerful. It's a secondary way of exploring it and bring awareness to it there when it's not the actual situation, but it was the past. But you can still, the emotion is very much in the present moment.

So although the memory brought it about, you're still experience, of course, the only thing you can experience, which is the present moment. So you feel some of that emotion strongly again, and then see if you can stay present with it, which simply means allowing this pain to be there feeling it without, and the key, of course, is without fueling it with your thoughts. Because as you may remember, there are two ways in which the pain body feeds, takes on more energy, absorbs more energy.

One way is through drama with other people, provoking other people, wanting the emotional reaction of other people's pain bodies. And you actually go in there and it's like poking, poking somebody psychically. You say that the pain body says the very thing that's most hurtful to the other person, especially people you're close to, that's where pain body like to feed in families and relationships.

And so you poke the other person exactly where it hurts, so to speak, not physically, but psychically. And then you get the reaction, and then perhaps your own pain body even, and so you're feeding the other person, it laughs at, shouting, screaming. But if you're alone, what do you do then?

How does the pain body feed when there's nobody around you, but at its feeding time comes, it wants to renew its energy, it moves into your mind, and makes you think certain thoughts that correspond to the feeling. And they're not pleasant thoughts because the feeling is not pleasant. The feeling, whatever the feeling is, anger or deep sadness, irritation.

And then you think the thoughts, how dreadful it all is. You remember my life, thoughts about my life. When they are fueled by the pain body, thoughts about your life become dreadfully unhappy.

And so every negative thought has energy frequency that the pain body absorbs. Basically, it thinks the thoughts that it wants to think through you. It uses your mind, the emotion, it's like an entity, it uses your mind and makes it think thoughts that

correspond to the kind of energetic intake that it likes.

It's vibrational, heavy, painful, negative thoughts. And it can go on for an hour, two hours, three hours. A day, two days.

And then a time comes when it doesn't need it anymore. It has taken on enough fresh energy and goes back to the dormant state. And you wake up, the drama is over, or the train of negative thinking.

You have a little bit of peace now until the next pain body feed comes. And so that's the pattern of the pain body. So when you go through this exercise that I just described, don't feed your pain body with your thoughts.

In other words, thinking negative thoughts because you have negative feelings in the anger, for example, extremely angry. So the thoughts that go with it, of course, are thoughts that one can sometimes read. I very rarely dip into the internet where people comment.

Now, 95% of comments, for example, when I post, well, actually somebody still does it for me, I don't know how, Facebook. When I post on Facebook, somebody posts what a little comment I write, a quote and a comment. And only the other day, for the first time, I started reading the comments that people make.

It's fascinating. Most of the comments are very, very positive. It's wonderful to read.

And then there's always, out of 50, there's one very negative, very angry person. No matter what you say, he or she, I don't know whether it's he or she, is very angry. You, how dare you say this?

I only talked about inner peace. How dare you? How dare you?

Who do you think you are? It is obvious that this has very little to do with me, but there's a very heavy pain body talking there. And no matter what I say, it would get triggered.

I could say, you are the most beautiful, how, what are you talking, nothing will work. So, there are some people who are in the grip, either permanently, some people have pain bodies that are almost permanently active. Even just underneath the surface, it's just waiting for the next thing.

It's always there somewhere, waiting for, you can look into their eyes and you feel this negative emotional entity waiting there behind, just for one wrong word, and you'll get the reaction. But if you're very present, actually, it won't come. It'll, and that person can experience a little bit of, oh, but it requires enormous presence when you're confronted with a very heavy pain body.

So, make sure when you do this practice, you are not feeding the pain body with your

thoughts, you're accepting what you feel on the level of feeling, bringing acceptance to that, be with it, feel the energy of it. And, a visual representation of that enormous anger is in the old TV series, The Incredible Hulk, where whenever this person gets angry, the body suddenly grows, huge muscles develop, the shirt rips open, and the person turns green or red, I can't remember, and becomes huge. And it's a beautiful visual representation of what is inside of the pain body when it grows.

And it's satisfying, people loved watching it, it's gone now, but, because you could feel it with him, it was a, perhaps a cathartic thing of, without endangering anybody, experiencing a bit of your own pain body as this person's pain body suddenly grows whenever he gets angry. And then he shrinks again until the next thing happens. One more from a paper, and then again, we come back to you.

Can the mentally ill, like bipolar, people who suffer from bipolar disorder, understand consciousness and awakening? I would say, yes. Bipolar disorder is only an intensification of what is considered normal, a much more intense version of what is normal.

So as we all know, bipolar is people who are getting taken over by enormous positive, so-called positive energy, and they do weird, mad things even when they're on a high, emotional, mental high. And then they experience the corresponding emotional, mental low, and they get taken over by mental, emotional states. That's what it is.

Now, every human being, even in the so-called normal state of consciousness, gets taken over by mental, emotional states when they are not conscious. And here's just an extreme form of such a takeover. So this person, especially in between the high or the low, there are periods when this person can actually begin to be shown that there is such a thing as awareness in themselves by simply simple practices, pointing out certain things.

Here's, there's a thought, and there's, you know that this thought is in you. Can you feel that emotion? Who is it that feels the emotion?

Are you the emotion? The thought that comes into your head, are you that thought? If you are not the thought, if you are not the emotion, who are you?

Those questions can point the person to awareness. Once you have accessed awareness, there is a chance that some awareness remains the next time one of the two, the high or the low, begins to take you over. There's no guarantee that that will immediately stop it or stop the behavior.

But if there's some witnessing consciousness, which is awareness in the background, you won't be taken over completely. So the beginning then is become acquainted with awareness in yourself. And then there is a chance that awareness remains as, and if

awareness grows in you, the intensity of the episodes will diminish.

It's not that they don't happen anymore, but gradually the intensity of the episodes diminishes. It diminishes. So that is, I would recommend that awareness practice.

So the answer then is yes, a person with bipolar disorder. The question is not quite right. The question says, can this person understand consciousness and awakening?

It's not really to do with understanding. It's with realizing it in yourself. Conceptual understanding is the first step, but then that, of course, is not enough.

You need to access awareness in yourself. Let's see if there are questions from the room. Somebody, Greg, or is going to choose.

[Speaker 2] (5:32:11 - 5:33:33)

Hi. Hi. I saw you speak with Wayne Dyer the other day, and there was a point where you were talking about this list of spiritually fantastic people or similar, and you mentioned that if you ever let it get to your head, that's the beginning of delusion.

Sorry, if you? If you let that thought. Oh, yes.

That idea. Oh, yes, yes, yes. That you're up high on the list.

That if you let that get to your head, it's the beginning of delusion, and what was interesting to me was you said something like, and I won't have it. Yes. And it was your strength in rejecting that idea, and I wonder how we can all get that same strength, so you get to a point where you sense the space and you love it, but you still revert back to thinking and various bad habits, whatever they might be.

Yes. How do we develop that strength where you just, I know I'm not gonna go there. Yes.

[Speaker 1] (5:33:34 - 5:33:35)

Good question.

[Speaker 2] (5:33:35 - 5:33:37)

Thank you. Yeah.

[Speaker 1] (5:33:43 - 7:11:28)

One way one could put it like this, presence, there is an awakening process, and as part of the awakening process, the presence that comes through you, it grows. There is a growth of presence, and it's only when presence has reached a certain level are you able to say, I won't have it. When presence has reached a certain level, you are also able to

say you can drop thinking if you don't want to think, and when you've reached that, I think quite a few of you, I feel, are at that level or approaching that level where you're able to be free of thinking when you say, I won't have it, especially if you feel old negative thoughts arising if they're still inside you, and you notice how harmful they are to your organism, even to the physical vehicle, what emotions they produce, and you can say, I won't have it. There was a spiritual teacher in India who never wrote a book, but somebody recorded his teachings in a wonderful book that I've often recommended called I Am That, and the name of the teacher is Nisargadatta Maharaj. I won't spell that for you, but I'm sure.

And he, one of the things he said when people asked, a questioner asked about meditation, but really the question was about presence, what is meditation, what is true meditation, which, of course, is presence, and his answer, he was very radical in his answers. And he said, it's very simple. It's the radical refusal to harbor thoughts.

That's what he looked like, right? Almost a little scary. The radical refusal to harbor thoughts.

That's the most radical spiritual teaching I've ever heard, but it's beautiful. It's quite extreme, one might say, but that, of course, presupposes or requires a considerable degree of presence that's in you to say, I refuse to harbor these thoughts or any thoughts at any time. When you're walking on the beach here, there are the clouds, there's the sea, there are the palm trees.

What is there to think about, or anywhere? And so, are you able to, in the words of Nisargadatta, refuse to harbor thoughts? Many of you are there, almost there.

I never expressed it in such extreme terms, but yes, I'm not having it. You drop it when you don't want to think, you don't think. That's the greatest achievement, by the way, if you think you'll want a successful life or are not quite happy with the success that you have achieved.

If you're able to not think when you choose not to think, you become incredibly empowered by the source of all creativity. It not only ends all the unnecessary drama in your mind, you also touch the source of all intelligence and creativity there. So, it's a wonderful thing.

And the greatest success that you can achieve, except it won't look to you as if you had achieved anything, because the you that was thinking in terms of achievement was mind-made. And when you're not thinking, the mind-made self dissolves. So, you don't get the sense of I have achieved enlightenment.

What about you? But it doesn't arise, unfortunately. It's bad news for the ego.

So, all we can do then is trust in the growing presence in you, and of course, being here

either as physical or tuning into here gives you an enormous boost of presence because this is what it is all about. It may not stay with you in that intensity as you go away from here, but some of it remains. Or it may.

Or it may be the end of all delusion. Some of you, it may be the end of non-acceptance, of not being able to live in the present, and from now on, you're aligned with the is-ness of now. For some, it happens all at once.

It's rare, but it does happen. For most, it's a process of awakening, and process is never a straight line upwards. Process is usually a spiral thing, so there's a gain in consciousness, and then you get drawn back into, mm, and then you come up again, and then you get, mm.

And sometimes you may have to experience a huge setback in your life that can happen to some in order to make an enormous leap forward in consciousness. As it happened to Wayne Dyer, he mentioned two instances in his life that would usually be regarded as very undesirable, being abandoned as a child, being an orphan, and then at a moment, he found himself by his father's grave, and he was able to forgive. He was still an adolescent, and that brought enormous, the event that would usually be regarded as extremely bad and negative, then turned around and became an influx of grace.

And more recently, as he shared with us, his illness, leukemia, and I could see the change, the deepening in him from last time I met him eight years ago to now, so again, something that normally would be considered bad through acceptance brought about a huge influx of consciousness. So let's trust in the process that it is happening in each one of you, and then eventually, you can drop these hot potatoes or hot coals, which you don't want them, not having that, the radical refusal to harbor thoughts. Thanks.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

This doesn't mean that you can't think again. Of course, you think again, but you're no longer run by old thoughts. You can think more creatively when you do think.

Let's look at one more here. One question is about psychotropic depression. Drugs?

Ram Dass isn't here, so we won't do it. I'll ask him, and then I'll convey the answer to you. Are the conceptual mind and the egoic mind the same thing, or are they both separate entities of the unconscious mind that like to work together and regularly high-five each other?

No. No. No.

No. No. No.

No. No. No.

No. No. I love that expression that originated in Australia.

No worries. Beautiful. Are the conceptual mind and the egoic mind the same thing?

Yes. The difference being the conceptual mind that gets hold of you, so you identify with it, becomes the egoic mind. The conceptual mind itself is fine.

It's a lovely tool. You can do great things with it, but when the sense of self becomes lodged in that conceptual mind, in every thought that arises, this, then it becomes the ego. And so that's the false self.

That is the self that is ultimately not real, that all spiritual traditions point to as illusory, that Jesus talked about, the deny thyself, which means deny the illusory, the illusion of the self. Well, what point is there in denying the self if it's real? So by saying deny thyself, the implication is, of course, it's not real.

And the Buddha's teaching, the very essence of the Buddha's teaching, means the unreality of the self, and that is the concept, the mind-made self. So the question is, do you have thoughts, or do thoughts have you? There is no problem with having thoughts, but when thoughts have you, you become a problem to yourself and to others.

And that's the false self. So that is always the question is, are you in the grip of your thoughts, or is there space around your thoughts? And do you realize that you are the space, not the thought, the spaciousness around the thought?

That's the question. So the conceptual mind and the egoic mind, the conceptual mind becomes the egoic mind when there is a sense of self in every thought. And you can see it in people who start arguing about the most insignificant thing, the need to be right in an argument, the defensiveness, the anger that arises, even the lying.

You would rather lie, any lie will do, as long as you can be right when you get involved in an argument and you identify it with your thoughts, which is your mental position, your viewpoint. You will lie, you will bring out any evidence, you come up with weird ideas, this is how it is, just to be right. But people come to physical fights just to decide who is right.

So how does this need arise to be right in an argument? It means there is self-identification with viewpoints in your mind. And what is a viewpoint?

It's a mental position. What is a mental position? It's a thought.

So the thought has you in its grip, you cannot distinguish between who you are and your thought. That is insanity. If you can't distinguish between a thought in your mind and your identity, it's a form of insanity.

And this is how people fight each other, not realizing it's thoughts. So if you are wrong, it

means nothing. It doesn't detract from your identity, but when you're identified with thought and you're wrong, you're virtually dead.

You feel totally devastated. So you can't allow that, you can't be wrong. This is just one example of the madness of complete self-identification with thought.

And so this is why we're here. We are definitely coming out of this self-identification with thought. So thought isn't a problem anymore without the self.

Anatta, in the Pali language, said the Buddha, the three, I love those three words of the Buddha's teaching in the Pali language. Anatta is the basic reality, no self. A means no, atta is the Pali for atman, no self, anatta.

Dukkha, suffering, misery. Anicca, impermanence. Those three, what he's saying is, all things are impermanent, all forms are nature.

All things are impermanent, forms come and go. If you attach yourself to forms and seek your identity in forms, especially the thought forms, then you have a self that is unreal. And so the teaching is anatta, there is no self, you can't find yourself in form.

Because if you look for yourself in form, then you experience dukkha, misery and suffering. That's a beautiful teaching, 2,500 years ago. So the Buddha just said, I teach suffering and the end of suffering.

So simple. Which means, I show you how suffering arises, and we've been doing that here all day. I show you how suffering arises, and when you see that, there's the end of suffering.

Because the seeing is the awareness, is the unconditioned. And this time I'm not going to run away. We'll go into stillness, just a little bit now.

Nobody's waiting, I hope. Forms dissolve quickly as the Buddha realized already. And you can verify in your experience, things come and go.

This retreat, there's a form, the external form of the retreat, the place, this room, the people coming together. It's beautiful. But what it really is powerful and beautiful is not the external form, it's something that's arising in you.

That's the essence of this, and that is timeless. So nothing really important is coming to an end. That which really matters is there in you.

And so the scenery changes as you, the body moves away today, tomorrow, next week. There's always something that remains unchanging. And that's consciousness itself.

We could call it the present moment. It's always the now that doesn't change. You can be sure that your life, your, your life is always now.

And the now in essence is who you are because it's a space for everything. Everything unfolds in the now and it's inseparable from who you are. So ultimately in the depths of it, what we call the now is the space of consciousness, the formless, the unborn.

And that's why we can talk about the power of now. And as you may have heard me say before, once or twice, the now is not what happens. That's the surface of the now, but it's not the now.

People confuse usually in ordinary existence, people confuse the now with, with what happens in the now. And therefore they say, every day consists of many, many moments, many present moments. That's how it looks when you think the now is what happens.

But if you look more closely, which in other words means in your immediate experience, you will see that your life does not consist of many moments. It's only when you go into thinking and then you remember, oh, there were past moments. I had breakfast this morning and so on.

But in your, that's your immediate experience is always only of this moment. Your life is always only this moment. So that's one can't really argue with because it's so obviously true.

So although we think life consists of many moments, that's because we confuse the now with what happens in the now. That of course changes continuously. That's what the Buddha refers to as the fact of impermanence.

And that's what the pre-Socratic philosopher Heraclitus or Heraclitus, who lived about the same time as the Buddha, 500 or so years BC. He had this famous saying, I believe in Greek, it's *panta*, which means everything flows. And he said, you cannot step into the same river twice because it's everything is different water.

So everything is continuous flux. He saw that as the essence of all life, which is true on the surface of things. But if you go deeper within, you have two dimensions.

You have the flux of birth and death, coming and going of forms. And you find the place within that actually is an unchanging presence or space. And that is the true meaning of now.

And that's the only place where anything can happen. There was actually another philosopher who lived shortly, I don't know, shortly after or shortly before Heraclitus, who said the exact opposite. He said, nothing ever changes.

It's an, the change is an illusion. They are both right. So if you can be in your, in the essence of who you are, and then from there, you deal with a world of form, which continuously changes.

So if you can sense within you that still presence, that's the essence, and that's the now, then you become the space for whatever arises. Then you don't need to cling to the forms, but you appreciate them, but you don't need to cling. I need to have this thing that or whatever form it is.

It could be also totally abstract. I need to have recognition. People need to recognize me as important.

They're all thought forms. I need somebody to understand me, thought forms. I need you to understand me, otherwise I can't be fulfilled.

My parents need to understand me. It's just a thought, they don't. Just imagine these people who need to understand you, suddenly say, yes, now I understand you.

Oh, okay. It looks, when it's not there, it looks, it's going to be some great fulfillment. When you look to a form that isn't here yet, and when you project, you think when it comes, then I'll be fulfilled.

When it actually does come, you go, oh, I need to be famous, become famous. When it actually does come, you say, oh, is that what it entails, all that stuff? That didn't complete me.

Let's think of something else. I want to become a hermit now. I have a few more questions that people submitted.

And as you know, every answer to a question really is more than just about the question. It really is always about the unchanging truths. Somewhere it's, the core is always the same, of course, of every answer.

Okay, let's start with this one. In my everyday life, I find peace and connection to the universe. Here at this retreat with birds in cages, noise, junk food, blah, blah, blah, something like that, I am finding it hard to connect to that peace.

How would you cope if you had to live in a disco for a week? Well, the, let's just address the two parts to this. One is the part of here, not living in these unusual surroundings, not your usual, perhaps more sedate and peaceful surroundings.

How would you cope? Okay, that's a hypothetical situation that's very unlikely to ever happen to me. Okay.

But if it did, there are two possibilities, of course. One is you open the door and go out and leave, and then you're at peace. If you can't be at peace in the disco, my choice would be to open the door and step outside and leave.

But if the doors are locked, I suppose that's what you're talking about. But, if the doors are locked and I can't get out, what's left is surrender. So I would probably start dancing.

And to the same here, there's a clash between what makes you feel comfortable, you perhaps live in a quiet place, and you're not usually surrounded by sun-bathing tourists, and birds in cages. I haven't seen them, but they must be around. And junk food, because you don't have to eat it, but.

It's quite good for retreats to be, I haven't yet, by the way, found an ideal retreat setting. One would have thought that going to an ashram in India would be more conducive to inner peace than being in a big hotel in Hawaii. But there too, you'll find things that disturb your peace.

For example, my first night in an ashram in India, you're on this bed, and I was given a deluxe room, as they call it. They said the Queen of Spain had also spent some time in that room. So you're under the, lying on your bed, the temperature is just one degree less than at midday, extreme, extremely hot, under a mosquito net, and then sleep doesn't come.

At 1.30 in the morning, the need to go to the toilet arises, but there are several huge mosquitoes sitting on the outside of the net, waiting for you to emerge. And then you just wait a little longer, and finally, you have to get out, being pursued by the mosquitoes, you run to the bathroom. And in the bathroom, suddenly a flutter arises, and there's a big bat flying around the ceiling.

And finally, you manage to get back under your mosquito net, and there's a little bit of sleep. And then, at 4.30, there's a knock on the door. Oh no, that's not all, I forgot.

At 2.30, there's in the street, there's a loudspeaker of very low sound quality, with some lovely religious chanting going on. Why are they chanting in the street, to a loudspeaker at 2.30 in the morning? I don't know, but it's, rah, rah, rah, rah, rah, rah, rah, rah, rah, rah, rah, rah.

In a way, it's lovely, because they're chanting about God, and it doesn't matter if they wake people up, it's. And then, after 20 minutes, that subsides, and then there's a little bit of sleep. And at 4.30, at 4.30, there's a knock on the door. And the man, I open the gate up, open the door. Of course, it's still dark. And the man comes with a bucket with hot water, and said, the hot water you ordered, it's 5.30. It's 4.30, I ordered it for 5.30. And. And. And. And.

Oh no, come back, no, you surrender, you have to surrender every moment, so that you become one with whatever is in that moment. So you immediately adjust to that, you adjust to the mosquitoes not being able to sleep, or you become unhappy. And so you accept that the hot water comes at 4.30 instead of 5.30. And so it goes on. And then finally, you go for breakfast in the big hall, you sit on the floor, there's a banana leaf on the floor, and a man comes with a huge bucket, or what's in it, I don't know, and then a ladle, and he goes, on your banana leaf, flop. And. It's wonderful, continuous, one

becoming one with what is.

And here you have the tourists. And the parrots in cages, and junk food. Probably the food on the banana leaf is more healthy in some ways, it's not junk food.

On the other hand, there may be certain things in there that the Western body is not used to. Which then results in very frequent visits to the bathroom. Wherever you go, there will be an opportunity for surrender, rather than want to, and that's part of the retreat, and it's part of, really, life.

Because wherever you go, you will find you get challenged by life, there'll be something that you need to surrender to, or you walk out. But very often, you need to go with it, rather than having expectations how things should be, you go with the, how things are, the is-ness, I call it, the is-ness of things in the present moment. And if you can be one with the is-ness, whether it's the bat in the bathroom, or whether it's the tourists here, then wherever you go, you can find peace.

That really is the purpose for realizing that, and without saying conditions need to be in a certain way, to be conducive. And if you could find the absolutely ideal place for a retreat, where everything works, and everything is absolutely immaculate and perfect, the food is exquisite, the temperature is just right, you get massages every day, in addition to the, pampered in every need is immediately met, you just have to say something, and somebody comes, yes, now you're totally undisturbed for meditation, absolutely perfect. Is that the ideal retreat?

Not really. The imperfections are actually more helpful than the perfect conditions. In the ideal retreat, or the ideal life, which doesn't exist, the life without challenges would be very similar to going to a movie in which there is no conflict.

Everybody is peaceful. Nothing really happens because there's no drama. The characters in the movie are not challenged by anything.

And so the movie viewers would go, Titanic without the accident. A perfect crossing. Two and a half hours of that.

But this is how people want their lives to be, they have this inner expectation, that's how it should be, or can be. But it's not like that. And then you begin to welcome the challenges.

It's actually fine. You don't demand that conditions should be perfect. They never are perfect.

And if they are, you go to sleep. Or if they are, they are not perfect for very long. Or you get so bored.

Oh, there's a question here about what is boredom? So that's the next question. You're not connected with the inherent aliveness within you.

You're floating on the surface of your mind and as a mind, you need continuous stimulus. If you are connected with the depths of your being, then even watching the perfect crossing of the Titanic would be fine, not that you would have to watch that. So if you're not connected, the mind needs stimulus and food.

What can I take in next? It needs some kind of sense of aliveness. I call it sometimes a substitute sense of aliveness.

So it looks for the next thing to, really, we could call it to reincarnate into the mind reincarnates and you identify with every form that arises. And when you identify with a form, that is what reincarnation is. Consciousness identifies with a form and does therefore a dreamlike state.

And that's, of course, what consciousness wanted to experience for a long, long time. And then it's had enough and then it wants to wake up out of the dream. So you can see how the mind grasps always at the next thing.

It used to be magazines that people, well, they still do. For instance, just one example, when people look through magazines, nothing really satisfies, but there's always something new there. But nowadays, of course, it's on the screen.

And it says, as we know, it has enormous addictive effect on the mind. But that restlessness, that is boredom, doesn't really arise. You become comfortable with being and you don't need something exciting.

But if it does, you appreciate whatever happens, but you don't need some kind of excitement around there to make you feel alive. And you become comfortable with sitting quietly in a room, too. One French philosopher said, all the ills of humanity are to do with the inability to sit quietly in a room.

It's really talking about the ability to enjoy your being, the essence of who you are. And you may find there comes a time as people are beginning to awaken that all the doings become less and less satisfying. What before was fulfilling and exciting is not really that satisfying anymore.

And so that means something else wants to come up in you, that is more essential, more vital. So, what are your suggestions for healing from deep grief of losing my two children last year in a boating accident? It's always painful, of course, when a loved one passes away, even more so when it seems far before their time, long before their time.

You have to become very still here so that you can sense, by sensing the essence of who you are, also sense that in your children that is not subject to decay and death. And it is

a realization within you. I don't want to give an explanation, something to believe in, but I would only suggest whenever deep grief of this kind comes, which you cannot deny, which is going to be there, nor should one say, I shouldn't be feeling grief, as you know, I mentioned it in a book, there was a philosopher, ancient Greek philosopher, who, when he was told that his son had died, he said, I knew he was not immortal.

Now, where that statement came from, we don't know. We don't know out of what inner state these words came. They either came out of a disconnection, a person who refused to feel emotional suffering, who disconnected himself from his emotions, that's possible.

It's also possible that the words he spoke, I knew he was not immortal, came out of a deep realization of the essence of all beings. I don't know which one it is, where the answer came from. If it came from the disconnection, then of course it was a false thing.

If it came from the deepest level, I know from my own experience with somebody close to me, dying, my parents, for example, which is painful enough, but not as painful as your children dying, that there is grief because this cannot be denied and weeping. At the same time, there's a deep sense of peace and even sacredness in the face of death. These two can coexist.

I'd like to assume that this Greek philosopher had connected with the essence of who he is and that he spoke from that essence when he said those words, they were not flippant words, they were deeply felt. And I'd also like to feel that he did feel grief when he heard that and perhaps wept. But nevertheless, he said, I knew he was not immortal.

He was very much aware of the precariousness of all forms, all life forms, all humans, all other life forms. And that is the awareness of that death could just be just around the corner for anybody. That is a fact.

No matter what age you are, it could be just, you could walk out and slip on a banana skin and bump your head against something and that's it. It could, it's possible. Anything.

So we tend to delude ourselves into believing as a society, Western society, there's still very much death denial. We don't know how to deal with it. We deny it.

We don't really talk about it much. Some people are beginning to talk about it now. But awareness of death is actually a very beautiful thing.

And somebody close to you dying can be, this can result in a awakening in you of the precariousness of all forms. And then that can, when you see how impermanent and precarious forms are, and as you get older, of course, you also begin to see in a more natural way, people that you knew are beginning to die. And sometimes even young people die and they suddenly, people little, where there was a form, there's a nothingness suddenly.

Tch, tch. And in the presence of death, you become very still. If tears come, they come.

Feel the, if you can feel the essence of another human being, a loved one, while they are still with you, that is very helpful so that you don't identify who that being is with the, neither with the physical form nor with the psychological form. There is a deeper essence in that human being. And so in essence, what dies is the physical becomes dust.

And then my intuition tells me that on the psychological level, the form survives and may reincarnate. But ultimately what reincarnates is still the form identity. The essence is beyond reincarnation.

The essence is timeless. So there is an essence in me. There is an essence in you that is beyond reincarnation.

So you could say only the misperception of who you are finds another vehicle until awakening happens. So what reincarnates is the misperception, the delusion of thinking I am a separate person. That delusional mind structure, psychic structure, closes itself in another physical form.

But underlying that delusion, there is the truth of who you are already. So underlying that, and you find it, don't wait for death to find that which is deathless in you. That is also a word that's sometimes used in some tradition, Buddhist traditions, where as you know, they deny the reality of the separate soul.

And ultimately that is true in ultimate terms. Ultimately, there's only God and each being is a temporary expression of that underlying one, the one reality. Buddhists, the closest they get to talking about God is they have the term they sometimes use, it's called the deathless.

It's the realization of in you of that which is beyond death. Then the death of someone close to you is still painful because yes, the form also, there was an attachment to the form, but was that all there was, or was there more? It's painful, but with that acceptance of the dissolution of a form, although grief comes, a deep stillness also arises.

And in that stillness, there is a knowing, not conceptual, but a knowing that at the core of each being, there is the deathless. And that is also when you sit with someone who is dying, which is a very sacred thing to accompany someone, to be with someone on their deathbed, is the most sacred thing really you can do. And you are called upon to be absolutely still and present.

And words may come out of your mouth, words may come from the dying person or not, but if you embody that presence, then you will realize that the death process is very sacred. I spoke some years ago to a woman who sat next to her son who was dying of an illness. He was in his 30s.

And in the moment that he died, she was absolutely present and she could feel the entire room being transformed into a sacred space. And at that moment, she knew ultimately there is no death and who he is in his essence has not died. The room was transformed.

And only 10 or 15 minutes later, she started to weep. So she lived for 10 minutes, she was in that deep realization. And then other levels came up in her, of course, which is quite natural.

But it was the most sacred thing she had ever experienced. It transformed her life. And it made something that otherwise would have been absolutely devastating into something that is still, of course, will bring grief, deep sadness, but also sacredness.

As more humans awaken, one of the most essential things to happen is that people are taught how to die. This should be one of the most important things. People who are able to teach that, not as a set of, but to teach it primarily to embody that state of consciousness that is necessary to be with a dying person.

And to talk about death to almost anybody should already be, even children at school should know about death, but especially, of course, older people, they should, the places where death is a sacred thing rather than a thing you deny, as in hospitals, nobody knows to know except a few nurses who intuitively can be with a patient, not because necessarily they have been taught it, but they're in a something from within response to the situation.

But on the whole, hospitals just try to prolong life as much as possible, even if it causes more and more pain. How to die, one of the most vital things. But of course, how to die is also not just how to die physically, that's very important, but every human being at any stage of their life needs to know how to die to the psychological mind-made self that's the spiritual death.

And that's why we're here, because you have already said yes to that. You don't want to continue to be trapped in the illusion of that mind-made little entity, and that's the kind of death. Also, cause and miracles, again, the beautiful lines at the beginning of the cause and miracles, nothing real can be threatened, nothing unreal exists, herein lies the peace of God.

That's really all you ever need to know. Nothing real can be threatened. Of course, the body can be threatened, so it's not absolutely real.

Any form can be threatened, so that's not absolutely real. Herein lies the peace of God is in knowing this in the depth of your being, there arises the peace of God, which means the peace of the unconditioned, the unborn, the formless, the essence. How do you stay present when there's chronic illness and the symptoms are so consuming, it is hard to

get peaceful?

The symptoms make your mind go a million miles a minute, and it's hard to focus on the breath because of asthma. For a long time in Christianity, in modern Christianities, maybe not really anymore, but medieval Christianity, and so for hundreds and hundreds of years, there was the image of the crucifixion was of extreme importance, and it sometimes actually worked beautifully for humans to look at that image, and especially if you are in deep suffering, because it is an archetype of human suffering, and you could then feel that you were sharing in the suffering of this archetypal human. You were sharing in their suffering, and thus you were able to accept your suffering, surrender. That's really the only way when this happens to you, chronic pain or chronic, very difficult condition, there's nothing else you can do except surrender, and I have met people who have experienced that extreme suffering, and I could see that through surrender, then their ego became eroded.

So surrender in extreme suffering can be one way of allowing your ego to be dissolved. It cannot survive in that, and then also your mind would become still in the midst of suffering. Otherwise, you have a hardening of ego if you resist it and have a lot of thoughts about it, how unfair it all is, how dreadful it is.

The ego can harden in suffering. The ego can dissolve in extreme suffering, and perhaps you have already seen the ego hardening is more common. The potential is there for the ego to be burned up.

It's not so much that it's burned up by the suffering. It's burned up by the deep surrender that is necessary. With the deep surrender, it would burn up in any situation.

The crucifixion is an image that can still, for some people, work. There's also, I talked about on the internet TV thing, I occasionally talk about a book, and one of the books I talked about was the medieval work, *The Imitation of Christ*, a lovely work of medieval spirituality. And *The Imitation of Christ* means that you become like Christ.

That's the sense of imitation. And that is a book that I would recommend to anybody who is in deep suffering. It can be very helpful in that state of suffering.

Suffering is also a path. Suffering that arises not because you create it out of your mind, but suffering that seems to come to you. So complete surrender to that really is, means it's almost then you accept it as if you had chosen it, which is an expression that I sometimes use.

You accept it as if you had, of course, as you know, in some new age teachings, you are told, why did you manifest that? Or they ask you, you must have chosen it on some level, but I don't say that. It creates anger in people.

And it's not necessary. You don't need to say you must have chosen it on some level, or

why did you manifest this? That person feels even worse.

I must have done something dreadfully wrong. It's also not right to equate physical, spiritual awakening with perfect health. It's not always the case.

There may be other factors that operate, which are karmic in the physical vehicle. Many things do dissolve in presence. Many old patterns do dissolve as intense presence arises.

There may be some, however, that do not dissolve. And so there have been enlightened masters who have contracted illnesses. And so let us not necessarily equate spiritual awakening with perfect health, that would be, or a perfect body.

I remember the spiritual teacher Gangaji saying, I was talking to her some years ago, when she first met her teacher, an Indian guru, and she was a body worker. And so she met this Indian guru, and at first she said she wasn't interested in him because being a body worker, her idea was a perfect body means a perfect spiritual realization. And this guy had a kind of crooked body, a little bit like mine, perhaps just bigger.

And she thought, how can a person with that posture possibly be awakened? Later she realized, of course, that was a misperception, but that was her first, being a body worker, that was her first thing. Of course, there is a relationship between inner states and the body.

Of course, it's preferable to have a healthy body. Of course, it's something through healthy diet and exercise, of course, you want to, it's wonderful to have a healthy body, but there's not necessarily that correlation. There may be other factors at work in the physical vehicle.

Some ancient Indian teachings say that the karma, the old karma is like an arrow that has left the bow, and even if you awaken, the arrow that has already been shot as this physical vehicle goes through its lifespan, it's the arrow that has been left, so it's the old karma. And there are some, unfortunately, some traditional teachings also in the West that equate perfect health with spiritual realization. There's a lot in Christian science.

There's spirituality there. The book, the foundational book for Christian science is a beautiful work, quite powerful, a lot of truth in there, and yet the complete equation of health and spirituality go together is not quite right, and even a beautiful teacher like Joel Goldsmith, who is a, if you haven't read, I'm sure many of you would love him, Joel Goldsmith, who lived, taught mainly in the 50s and early 60s, he lived actually in Hawaii, and his teachings are an expression of oneness, oneness, non-duality, what's called advaita in Indian terminology. He expressed oneness through his teaching in Christian terminology, so he deepened the Christian message through his teachings, but he too, because he came from, originally from Christian science, there was a little bit, unfortunately, too much of a correlation of physical health and physical healing with

spiritual realization, to the extent that when he had his first heart attack, it had to be kept secret from the followers, because the followers would have thought, oh, he hasn't realized, he's just talking about it, it's not the case, and finally, he did die of another heart attack, and finally, they had to admit he died of a heart attack. Suffering, physical suffering, suffering, psychological suffering.

In many cases, it's the psychological suffering that can be far worse than the physical, but in extreme cases, the physical can be pretty bad, but then surrender is the answer here, so that all psychological suffering dissolves. I witnessed in the case of my mother, when her body was growing old, the body she had identified with all her life, up to the age of 80, as being quite fit, quite slim, always looking, oh, look, this is, look at that fat person there, she would say, and I said, how can you say that? And then she looked in the mirror and said, oh, I'm still so slim, but look so good, and then her physical appearance, being identified with that, and then as she was growing older, the body suddenly failing.

She had a fall, her hip couldn't walk properly anymore, had to use the thing that you push, push, what, push, walker, walk, whatever, and there was discomfort, not extreme pain, but some discomfort, some pain, but not extreme. The extreme pain was the psychological pain. Why did that happen to me?

Other people, look, they're all looking at me now, dread, I'm not going out anymore. It's dreadful what's happened to, why did this have to happen to me? I tried to explain it's old age, the body is beginning to go, but we look at other people, they don't, if you had really looked at the suffering of humanity, you would see that you're quite lucky that you have to reach the age of 80 with an excellent body and only then it's beginning to fail.

There were brief insight, brief realizations when I was sat with her, but then immediately the old mind came back, unfortunately. So I'm sure she will have an opportunity to reincarnate and given another chance to experience her sensual, to know her sensual reality. So many nice questions.

Given all the responsibilities in today's world of raising children, would young married hybrids not be more trapped in the world of form focused on setting goals and planning future activities while a retired individual like myself can easily be more present? Well, there's perhaps some truth. It's more challenging perhaps to be present in the midst of continuous activity in daily life, but that's a good thing.

The challenge is a good thing. Old age is a wonderful opportunity, of course, for spiritual realization. And again, like death also, old age should be, could be the flowering of life for any human being.

If they reach old age, well, somebody once said, old age isn't so bad if you consider the alternative. You reach old age and it's a time of letting go of that which is false, of

consciousness, flowering of consciousness, experiencing, knowing, realizing the essence of who you are as the body begins to dissolve almost. And again, many old, nobody can teach that yet.

It's very few people. There will be old age places where people can grow old rather than waiting for death, spiritual centers where old people go and where spiritual realization in old age is encouraged and helped along. Then it's the, so you are, I'm very happy that you are flowering now in old age and it's a beautiful opportunity for the younger people who are still immersed in all kinds of activities.

The talent of being present may be greater, but it's equally important to bring being into the doing. And we've been talking about this a lot, but perhaps I haven't put it quite like that. While you do not lose yourself in the activity, don't treat all these activities as means to an end.

Be present in whatever you do. Don't project forward continuously. The beautiful teaching in the Bhagavad Gita, the ancient Indian scripture, one of the main spiritual practices recommended in the ancient Bhagavad Gita is translated into English.

The term is karma yoga, but it's translated in one of the beautiful translations as consecrated actions. So every action, it says you consecrate to God. You're not doing it for yourself.

It's a consecration. So every act is that. So that is also another word where you could translate it as surrendered action.

And you don't look to the fruit of your action, it teaches. Don't look always to the outcome, always the next moment, but treat every action as self-contained, that you're driving the children to school. Why project yourself mentally of having arrived already at the school?

And once you do that, you have another projection. Or getting the children ready to go to school. Is it possible?

I'm not telling you it is possible because I haven't had children, but you have to find out, but I know it's possible in many other ways. You have to find out whether it is possible to get the children ready without stress and without necessarily even slowing down. You can still be fast.

Can you enjoy the movement? Can you enjoy the energy behind what you do in the moment? Rather than getting stressed, thinking we should already be there, but we are here, we shouldn't be here.

So that's incredible to experiment with that. You may not succeed all the time, but experiment with moving fast without stress because the stress is not generated by

moving fast. The stress is generated by doing one thing here, but mentally already wanting to be there.

That causes a tension between the doing and where you want to be at the end of the doing or whatever it is. You want to be, that is where stress arises. Stress does not come from working fast.

You have to add something to the working fast that projects you away from the present moment. You can hurry to get somewhere without stress. You should try it.

Next time you have to hurry to get somewhere, you're late. See if you can move fast or whatever you do without stress. It is possible.

And once you do that, you actually enjoy the high energy of that moment. Oh, wow, it's great. I'm alive.

Trying to catch a bus. And don't be attached to the outcome or as the Bhagavad Gita says, to the fruit of your action. In the case of the catching the bus means, ultimately, whether you catch it or not, isn't that important?

And if you don't catch it, you surrender there. So you introduce another level into your daily activities. There's not only what you need to do on the level of your daily activities.

There's another level introduced into your daily activities. That means your daily activities become a spiritual practice and you are almost more interested in that than in what you're doing. So the two come together.

That means being flows into doing. Otherwise, you can only either lose yourself in the doing, which includes thinking. Thinking is a doing.

You lose yourself in thinking and then you lose yourself in your activities, always reaching out to the next thing. Or you can be in being, but then you have two separate compartments in your life. You're quite good at meditating.

Dad, can you help me with this? Can't you see I'm meditating? That means the being hasn't merged with the doing.

Leave me alone. I'm not meditating. I'm meditating.

I'm practicing loving kindness, metta. So daily life as a spiritual practice, every challenge, everything. How do you meet the challenge?

How do you do what you do? Being and doing merging. Ah, it's been a life-changing journey.

Now I'm lost. My so-called life is in crumbles and I can't seem to put the pieces back

together. Your life is not, has not crumbled.

Maybe your life situation, I don't know the details of a life situation, but your life is now and it's fine. What's wrong with this moment, with your life now, the life that you are? The rest is a mental construct.

Yes, there are situations that you may need to deal with in your external circumstances. These are your life situation. But if you lose yourself in your life situation, and this happens to the majority of humans, then you miss the most essential thing there is, and that is your life, which is now.

It has no problem now. There is no problem in the now, ever. So the more you dwell in the problem-less, the problem-less now, the more, I would say, empowered you also become by life itself, which can guide you and help you into dealing with the life situation.

Then you look, you become still. You look, you're sitting on a bench. I'm giving an example because I'm familiar with that.

You're sitting on a bench, not much, just a little bit of money left in your pocket. Can you feel the life that you are? Is there a problem at this moment?

No, of course not. This moment is beautiful. I can sense the aliveness in the depths of my being, and from there, I perceive the world around me, the trees, the sky, I can feel the wind, every little detail, it's lovely, it's beautiful.

There is no problem here in this moment. And then the mind, of course, says, okay, what are you going to, where are you going to spend the night? What are you going to live on tomorrow?

And you become still, and see if there's any action you can take. And then you may find yourself getting up from the bench and going somewhere, or calling somebody, or you may suddenly see something that points you to where, what's the next step in your life? Or somebody may come to you and offer help.

This often happened to me when I was sitting around, sometimes not knowing where to go, what to do. Very often, help came from the outside, and sometimes it was a combination of initiating something, and then the universe helping you along. So you take one step at a time.

The important thing is to be rooted in life so that you don't lose yourself in your life situation. From once you're rooted in life, then you deal with things one thing at a time. You do what you can.

So the idea that your life has crumbled is just a mental construct. Your life is fine. We're

calling it your life, of course it's not yours.

It's the life that you are. The rest is things you do, the situations you deal with. If you exist exclusively in the mental construct, we talked about that probably yesterday, then you think in terms of, oh, what's my life, where has it gone to?

What's, that you live in that mental construct that you call my life, and it's not a pleasant place. Cada vez que intento meditar y estar presente, me invade gran sensación de cansancio y sueño. Quisiera saber su opinión al respecto.

That happens to some people. I would highly recommend, if that's the case with you, that as soon as you become still, you go, because you fall below thinking, that's what it is. You become still, and then you go, hmm.

Instead of rising above thinking and actually being more alert, you go, thinking, above thinking, below thinking. I would highly recommend a physical, associating the state of presence with some physical practice, such as yoga, tai chi, qigong. If you fall asleep while doing tai chi, it's not pleasant.

So to be on, to stand on that one leg and go like that, as seen in the movies, you have to be really present. And then perhaps gradually, a time may come then, where you can also sit still and be present. So that is a great help for many people, presence in movement through movement.

One or two more. Okay. How do you deal with being in the now all day?

You get hungry after all the shops are closed. In Denmark, they close and you didn't shop because you weren't hungry before. This person says, in Denmark, the shops close early, so you can't go out late at night and buy things.

The person apparently is from Denmark. Welcome. So you're in the now all day.

And of course, the questioner says, because you're in the now, you're not going to do any shopping, are you? Of course, that's a false assumption. And then suddenly you get hungry, and then the shops are closed.

[Speaker 4] (7:11:28 - 7:11:30)

Ha ha ha.

[Speaker 1] (7:11:39 - 7:18:56)

Clock time and psychological time. We're talking about the psychological time, not about disregarding clock time and disregarding the practical aspects of your daily life, where you say, where you look in the fridge and you know that tomorrow morning, you're going to need your muesli and whatever else you have and some fruit, and the fridge is empty,

and you say, right, I need to buy muesli and fruit for tomorrow morning. Does that mean you have left the present moment?

No. You have left the present moment when you sit there and think, isn't it going, my life going to be wonderful when I get that muesli again tomorrow morning? Or I wonder if they have muesli in that hotel I'm going to tomorrow, and then you give them mental movies about muesli in the morning.

But there's no, you don't leave the now when you say, all right, tomorrow morning, I need this. Therefore, I'm going to the shop now. And while you look in the fridge, you're present.

And while you write down on a piece of paper, muesli, bananas, nuts, you're present. And while you put the piece of paper in your pocket and open the door and walk towards the shop, you're present. And while you buy the muesli, you're present.

So you don't lose the now, you don't have to wait until you get hungry to do your shopping. So you don't lose the ability to deal with your life situation and what is needed. You can't say, I'm never going to book a flight again because I'm lose the present moment.

And I'm only going to book it the moment I want to go and say, is there a seat left? That's not how it works. You can plan for the future.

It has nothing to do with losing yourself in the future. And even while you plan the future, you can be present in the planning. You can draw up a plan if you know how to.

I'm going to build a house. Yeah, why not? And this is how it's going to look like.

Are you losing the present moment? No, you'll go, shh, shh, shh. And then I visualize it like that.

And that's how it's going to be, completely present. But you'll lose yourself when you dream about that new house and how wonderful it's going to be when you finally move in, you will finally be at peace and finally people will come and visit you and admire your wonderful new place. That's losing yourself in the future.

Or you worry about the house. Well, is it all going to work? Or think about all the things that we'll have to do and useless thinking, not purposeful, just useless daydreaming.

Space of the present. And, ah, so what you take with you from here, to put it in external terms, is this. This is, you take with you the space, which is what you are, who you are in your essence.

The rest is form, of course it dissolves. It's fine. So this is not the end of the retreat because the retreat is finding the essence, realizing the essence of who you are.

That's the essence of the retreat. And so that's the retreat. Whatever you see here is the surface of it.

Some people, if you confuse the surface and essence and you feel, oh, what a pity. Or in the case of the man who is not happy with the, there may be a few others, not happy with the tourist hotel and the trapped birds and the junk food, they can happily look forward to their usual place of residence. But I suggest the alternative possibility.

This is your last chance of surrendering to this place here. So if you haven't done it yet, this is your last chance of saying this is how it is and be comfortable with the isness of this place because while you're here, because you happen to be here at this moment, you're not going to change the hired hotel. So in some situations you can take action to initiate change in a situation, but you would fight a useless battle if you try to change things here, it would be pointless.

It is not necessary. So use the last hour or two that you have here. And if you haven't surrendered yet, walk through where all the tourists are sunbathing in a state of surrender.

There's nothing wrong with it, it's what is. Thank you. I may see some of you a little later.

I wish you well, be at peace, rooted in essence, surrendered to what is. As the Beatles song says, it's easy. Thank you.